



# Reconceiving the House of the Father: Royal Women at Ugarit

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Reconceiving the House of the Father: Royal Women at Ugarit

A dissertation presented

by

Christine Neal Thomas

to

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

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Reconceiving the House of the Father: Royal Women at Ugarit

Abstract

Every father is the son of a mother. While this would appear to be a commonplace, studies of patrimonialism as a political system in the ancient Near East have rarely considered its implications. Royal women, as objects of exchange and as agents of political action, played a central role in negotiations between Late Bronze Age states and in dynastic struggles within these states. The relative positions of royal men were shaped by their relationships to royal women.

In three case studies of texts from Ugarit, this dissertation elucidates the instrumentality and agency of women in the reproduction of royal households and in the formation of interdynastic alliances. The first case study considers Ugaritic letters from kings to their mothers. The letters reveal that royal women could maintain their positions as queens from the reigns of their husbands into the reigns of their sons. Furthermore, the forms of address and self-identification the king used in relationship to his mother suggest a reciprocity in their political status.

The second case study examines Hittite imperial verdicts concerning two pairs of royal mothers and sons. The first set of verdicts demonstrates that a royal woman's ability to maintain her tenure as queen after the death of her husband benefited both herself and

her son. In the second set, a royal woman's loss of position as queen undermined her son's and her male kinsmen's positions.

The third case study analyzes the Hittite imperial verdicts and regional accords between Ugarit and Amurru that document the divorce, exile, and execution of the wife of the king of Ugarit. This woman, the daughter of a king of Amurru and a Hittite princess, embodied the intersection of imperial and interregional alliances across three generations. By stripping her of her status as a royal wife, daughter, sister, and mother, the king of Ugarit circumscribed the authority of her son and brothers and asserted his will within the Hittite imperial system.

Patrimonial rule depended on the political polyvalence of women. The royal "House of the Father" was not a system revolving around one powerful man, but a network of alliances under constant negotiation by royal women and men.

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## INTRODUCTION

Every father is the son of a mother. While this would appear to be a social and biological commonplace, studies of patrimonialism as a political system in the ancient Near East have rarely considered its implications. Royal women, both as objects of exchange and as agents of political action, played a central role in the negotiations between Late Bronze Age territorial states and in the dynastic struggles within these states. The interdynastic marriage alliances intended to forge political bonds between royal men depended on individual women functioning in several positions at the same time: as daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers. Within royal households a woman's status relative to other royal women, the status of her father, and her relationship to the king determined her ability to advance her own interests and the interests of her son. These dynamics among and within royal households are apparent in texts from the Late Bronze Age site of Ugarit. In a series of three case studies of letters and legal verdicts from Ugarit, this dissertation will examine the instrumentality and agency of women in the reproduction of royal households and in the formation of interdynastic alliances. I argue that not only did royal women have significant roles in these arenas, but the relative positions of royal men were shaped by their relationships to royal women.

Ugarit provides rich resources for such a study because of its place in the political system of its time. Ugarit was a commercially vibrant city-state situated on the Levantine coast, bordered to the north by the expanding territorial state of Hatti and to the southeast by the kingdom of Amurru. Texts discovered at Ugarit document its history from

approximately 1350 BCE to its destruction around 1190/85 BCE. Prior to the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century Ugarit was in the sphere of Egyptian dominance, as attested in the letters from the Amarna archive.<sup>1</sup> The military campaigns of Šuppiluliuma I in Syria in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century made Ugarit, like its neighboring polities, a vassal state of Hatti. However, Ugarit's wealth gave it a degree of leverage in its relations both with Hatti and with its neighbor Amurru. Texts from Ugarit offer unique access to a multifaceted perspective on political relationships within Syria and between Syrian states and the Hittite imperial powers. The perspective these texts offer is unique because of the nature and richness of the archives themselves and because of the current state of excavation in the region. Subsequent to Šuppiluliuma I's campaigns and increasingly so through the 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Hittite rule in Syria was administered by the Hittite viceroy in Karkamiš. However, because of modern military conflict, excavation at the site of Karkamiš has not continued to the Late Bronze Age levels.<sup>2</sup> The site of the capital of Amurru in this period has not been identified.<sup>3</sup> At Ugarit, however, in addition to the official vassal treaties that

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<sup>1</sup> EA 45 and 49, and likely, on the bases of their paleography and clay type, the fragmentary letters EA 46-48. See *The Amarna Letters*, ed. and trans. William Moran (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 118, n. 1; William Foxwell Albright, "An Unrecognized Amarna Letter from Ugarit," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 95 (1944): 30-33; and John Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, Harvard Semitic Studies 34 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 12. Significantly, Albright notes that the letters from Ugarit, EA 45, 47, and 48, all "exhibit a curious mixture of humility and independent attitude, sometimes approaching a tone of equality" (30-31).

<sup>2</sup> Gary Beckman, "Ugarit and Inner Syria during the Late Bronze Age," in *Le royaume d'Ougarit de la Crète à l'Euphrate: Nouveaux axes de recherche*, J.M. Michaud, ed. (Sherbrooke: G.G.C., 2007), 164. Beckman notes the fact that texts from Karkamiš have also been found at Emar; however, these are not comparable in number or range of genre to those from Ugarit.

<sup>3</sup> Petrographic analysis of the Amarna tablets sent by rulers of Amurru to the Egyptian Great Kings has considerably advanced the understanding of the expansion of Amurru as a polity and the shifts in location of its capital in the mid-second millennium. Nonetheless, the location of its capital in the Late Bronze Age still remains unclear and no significant textual finds within Amurru have been found. See Yuval Goren,

established Hittite sovereignty, excavations have unearthed scores of imperial legal verdicts from Hatti and Karkamiš as well as interregional accords between the rulers of Ugarit and Amurru.<sup>4</sup> These texts reveal the workings of political life in Hittite Syria beyond the programmatic visions of the Hittite vassal treaties. In addition to these imperial texts, hundreds of texts in the local language, Ugaritic, offer a view of life from within the kingdom. Royal women figure in all of these groups of texts.

Prosopographical research has identified seven royal women associated with the seven kings attested at Ugarit from approximately 1350 to 1190/85 BCE, the period documented in Ugarit's extant archives, which coincides with the period of Hittite rule.<sup>5</sup> Correlated with the chronology established for their husbands' reigns, these queens are: Pišidqi, wife of Niqmaddu II (1350-1315 BCE); Kubaba, wife of Arhalba (1315-1312 BCE); Aḫatumilki, wife of Niqmepa (1313-1260 BCE); an unnamed Amurrite princess who was the wife of Ammistamru II (1260-1235 BCE); Šarelli, wife of Ibiranu (1235-1225/20 BCE); Eḫli-Nikkalu, wife of Niqmaddu III (1225/20-1215 BCE); and Ašdada,

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Israel Finkelstein, and Nadav Na'aman, "The Expansion of the Kingdom of Amurru According to the Petrographic Investigation of the Amarna Tablets," *BASOR* 329 (2003): 1-11.

<sup>4</sup> Jean Nougayrol, "Les Textes Accadiens," in *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit Vol. III: Texts Accadiens et Hourites des Archives Est, Ouest et Centrales*, Claude F.-A. Schaeffer, Mission de Ras Shamra 6, (Paris: Imprimeries Nationale and Klincksieck, 1955). Nougayrol, *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit Vol. IV: Textes Accadiens des Archives Sud, Archives Internationales*, Mission de Ras Shamra 9, Claude F.-A. Schaeffer, ed. (Paris: Imprimeries Nationale and Klincksieck, 1956). Hereafter PRU III and PRU IV.

<sup>5</sup> Michael C. Astour, "King Ammurapi and the Hittite princess," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 12 (1980): 103-108; Daniel Arnaud and Mirjo Salvini, "Le Divorce du roi Ammistamru d'Ougarit: un Document Redécouvert," *Semitica* 41/42 (1991-1992): 7-22; M Dijkstra, "On the Identity of the Hittite Princess mentioned in Label KTU 6.24 (RS 17.72)," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 22(1990): 97-101; Itamar Singer, "The Title 'Great Princess' in the Hittite Empire," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 23 (1991): 327-338.; Itamar Singer, "The Political History of Ugarit," pages 601-733 in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Nicholas Wyatt Wilfred G. E. Watson (Boston: Brill, 1999); W. H. van Soldt, "The Queens of Ugarit," *Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux* 29 (1985/6): 68-73; W. H. van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar*. Kevelaer: Butzon and Bercker, Neukirchener Verlag, 1991.

wife of Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit (1215-1190/85 BCE). The first attested royal woman, Pišidqi, is recorded once in a legal text dated to her husband Niqmaddu II's reign and a second time in a text dated to the reign of her grandson Ammistamru II.<sup>6</sup> Only two surviving texts dated approximately 55 years apart may appear to be scant evidence upon which to reconstruct the trajectory of Pišidqi's influence in the royal household.

Nonetheless, the two best-documented royal women, Aḫatumilki and Šarelli, clearly exercised authority over an equally lengthy period. As the two surviving texts suggest for Pišidqi, Aḫatumilki's and Šarelli's documented activity continued beyond the reign of their husbands and into the reigns of their sons. The span of the texts associated with Aḫatumilki, from her dowry to the verdict that records her intervention in a threat to her son's rule, covers the period roughly from 1314 to 1239 BCE.<sup>7</sup> As for Šarelli, records of her diplomatic and economic activity and her correspondence with her son the king extend from the reign of her husband Ibiranu, through the reign of her son Niqmaddu III, and perhaps even to the coronation of her grandson Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit.<sup>8</sup> The surviving texts attest to the continuing roles these women played in the political life of Ugarit over the course of the reigns of their husbands and sons.

Through a series of three interlocking case studies of a particular cross-section of texts concerning royal women, I will show how relationships between royal women and men structured political life both within Ugarit and between Ugarit and its neighbors. The

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<sup>6</sup> RS 16.277 (PRU III: 50-51) and RS 15.086 (PRU III: 51-52).

<sup>7</sup> RS 16.146 (PRU III) and RS 17.352 (PRU IV: 121-122).

<sup>8</sup> RS 34.126 (KTU 1.161). See Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, "Le Rituel Funéraire Ougaritique RS 34.126," *Syria* 59 (1982): 121-128 and Singer, "A Political History of Ugarit," 691.

purpose of these case studies is not simply to recover the roles of royal women but to show how the political positions and self-identification of royal men were shaped by their relationships to royal women. This dissertation will not offer a comprehensive survey of royal women at Ugarit or a normative assessment of the status of women at Ugarit as a whole. Two such studies have already been undertaken and they differ profoundly from both the methodology and the goals of this work. Hennie Marsman's comparative study of women at Ugarit and Israel in light of other ancient Near Eastern societies provides useful points of contrast.<sup>9</sup> Marsman seeks to determine the status of women in Ugarit and Israel primarily through the analysis of mythological and biblical texts.<sup>10</sup> Marsman's study is a rich presentation of texts concerning women in a broad span of periods and cultures. The scope of the sources she brings together is formidable.

However, the terms in which Marsman assesses of the status of women differ fundamentally from the framework of this study. Marsman seeks to assess whether women were subjugated or not subjugated to men. Marsman states that the main question

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<sup>9</sup> Prior to Marsman's study was Eleanor B. Amico's unpublished dissertation, *The Status of Women at Ugarit* (University of Wisconsin, 1989). Amico followed a similar line of analysis to the one Marsman would take. Amico's dissertation is a broad-ranging survey in which she seeks to characterize the roles of women in the family, economy, public life, and religion. Her objective is to assess the degree of women's autonomy in a patriarchal social system and how much authority they had relative to men in the culture (18). Like Marsman, she considers women as a collective, she assesses her material in a synthetic manner, and she works within a paradigm of freedom or repression. Her conclusion, contrary to Marsman, is that women "had a surprising amount of autonomy and freedom. The society was patriarchal but not restrictive or oppressive of women"(491). Her comprehensive approach to women as a group within categorically defined sectors of society differs from the approach of this study, but her conclusion anticipates what is basic to this analysis: that women, like men, exercise agency within hierarchical social structures. Furthermore, while her ultimate questions juxtapose female autonomy to patriarchal repression, in her introduction she calls for a relational analysis similar to the one pursued in this study: "we must ask what indeed are the relations between the sexes, not just from a male perspective, but also from the perspective of the women in a society"(17).

<sup>10</sup> Hennie Marsman, *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*, Oudtestamentische Studien 49 (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

of her study is “whether the social and religious position of Israelite women was worse, equal or better than those living in neighboring polytheistic cultures.”<sup>11</sup> Israel is the real focus of her work. Her primary concern is not the political history of Ugarit, but rather the role of the Bible in the subordination of women. The stakes of her inquiry are theological. Marsman’s paradigm of subjugation polarizes the categories of male and female and renders them trans-historical, rather than seeing them as co-constitutive social positions contingent on time and place. The paradigm does not allow for the fact that elite women participated in the construction, maintenance, and perpetuation of the political systems they inhabited. Her ultimate assessment is that, “the social and religious position of women was the same in Ugarit and Israel, and . . . in the ancient Near East as a whole. Everywhere women were subordinated to men, even though women belonging to the upper classes often enjoyed more freedom than other women.”<sup>12</sup>

The textual basis on which Marsman assesses the roles of women in Ugarit also differs from those of this study. As stated above, Marsman’s primary sources, upon which she evaluates the position of women in Israel and Ugarit, are biblical texts and Ugaritic myths. Marsman reads the biblical texts and mythological texts from Ugarit in the context of a broad sweep of historical sources ranging from the third to first millennium BCE, from Mesopotamia to Egypt. She then concludes by using non-literary texts from Ugarit and Israel-- letters, seals and bullae, and legal texts-- as a means to

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid xi.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid 738.

“check the reliability of literary texts.”<sup>13</sup> She defines the social positions of mother, daughter, sister, widow, wife, queen, princess, and queen mother categorically, independent of historical context or individual contingencies, and uses non-literary texts to establish normative characterizations of each, data that she then correlates with how such figures appear in literary texts.<sup>14</sup> The flaw of Marsman’s approach is that, for her, non-literary texts function primarily as sources for confirmation or contradiction of her analysis of literary texts, rather than as sources to be interpreted in themselves.<sup>15</sup>

Letters and legal verdicts are sources that require interpretation as much as any literary text. Their conventions and rhetorical structures, the terms in which they identify sender and recipient, plaintiff and defendant, are as much constitutive as they are reflective of the social world in which they are embedded. This dissertation will deal with three case studies of letters and legal verdicts. The first case study concerns Ugaritic letters sent by kings to their mothers. The second and third case studies examine Hittite imperial legal verdicts concerning royal women. Gender analysis will provide the lens for each case study. The touchstone for my approach is the paradigm for political history that Joan Scott presented in her landmark article, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid 627.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid 690-696.

<sup>15</sup> Arguably, another problematic dimension of Marsman’s project lies in the ultimate goal that shapes her work. Her effort to determine whether polytheism or monotheism allowed for a less subjugated position for women is intended to assess whether the biblical text provides sufficient basis for the ways it has been used in modern periods to shape the status of women. This approach presumes that in all cases the biblical text reflected a monotheistic society, and it requires her to consider Ugaritic mythological texts as sources for normative gender relations in the same way in which biblical texts became normative in their communities of reception.



Analysis.”<sup>16</sup> The understanding of the term “gender” operative in this dissertation is what Scott defines as “a way of referring to the social organization of the relationship between the sexes.”<sup>17</sup> My use of the term “gender” is meant, as Scott did, “to introduce a relational notion into our analytic vocabulary.”<sup>18</sup> Because male and female are relational social positions, historical data on women are also data on men. This insight is crucial to my study. The data on royal women drawn from the Ugaritic letters and the Hittite imperial verdicts are also data about royal men. Indeed, the political positions of royal men and their relationships with other men cannot fundamentally be understood apart from their relationships with royal women. This study shares the conviction articulated by Scott that scholarship on women “would not only add new subject matter but would also force a critical reexamination of the premises and standards of existing scholarly work.”<sup>19</sup> Rather than simply identifying women’s roles in a political system, this study will offer a reconception of the political system in light of women’s roles within it.

The field of feminist historiography has changed in the decades since Scott set forth this vision of gender as a category of analysis. In her reflections on the development of the field, Scott harkens back to the early stages of the political and intellectual movement of which her work was a part, namely the 1973 Berkshire Conference on

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<sup>16</sup> Joan Wallach Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *The American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1053-1075.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid 1053.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid 1054.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Women's History.<sup>20</sup> As Scott states it, the papers that came out of this conference constituted a "rallying cry" for many: in making women's experiences a focal point for historical work she and others sought to "reveal some larger truth about human relationships-in our case, about gender and power."<sup>21</sup> This "rallying cry" reached into other fields. For example, in the field of biblical studies, in the early 1980's, Jo Ann Hackett presented new movements in feminist historiography in a series of conference papers and a subsequent article.<sup>22</sup> Hackett presented the work of scholars from the dynamic period of the mid-1970's, including that of Joan Kelly-Gadol who was a participant in the Berkshire Conferences.<sup>23</sup> Kelly-Gadol's articulation of the new approach in feminist historiography anticipated the framework that Joan Scott put forward of gender as a category of historical analysis.<sup>24</sup> Hackett presented the ultimate goal of

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<sup>20</sup> Joan Wallach Scott, "Feminism's History," in *The Fantasy of Feminist History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011) 23.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid 24.

<sup>22</sup> Jo Ann Hackett, "Women's Studies and the Hebrew Bible," *The Future of Biblical Studies: the Hebrew Scriptures*, Richard Elliott Friedman and H.G.M. Williamson, eds. The Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 141-164 and "In the Days of Jael: Reclaiming the History of Women in Ancient Israel," in *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality*, ed. Constance H. Buchanan Clarissa W. Atkinson, and Margaret Miles, The Harvard Women's Studies in Religion Series (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985) 15-38.

<sup>23</sup> In her summary of the "New Women's History," Hackett cites Joan Kelly-Gadol's article, "The Social Relation of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women in History," *Signs* 1 (1976): 809-823. See Hackett, "Women's Studies and the Hebrew Bible," 147 and "In the Days of Jael," 17. In her own article, Kelly-Gadol locates her work among the "dramatic new perspectives" unfolding at that time in the early 1970's. See Kelly-Gadol, "The Social Relation of the Sexes," 810-811, n. 2.

<sup>24</sup> Hackett cites Kelly-Gadol's programmatic statement: "We have made of sex a category as fundamental to our analysis of the social order as other classifications, such as class and race. And we consider the relation of the sexes, as those of class and race, to be socially rather than naturally constituted, to have its own development, varying with changes in social organization. Embedded in and shaped by the social order, the relation of the sexes must be integral to any study of it" (Kelly-Gadol, "The Social Relation of the Sexes," 816, cited in Hackett, "In the Days of Jael," 17). Kelly-Gadol argues that the theoretical innovation that the study of women can make to historical study as a whole derives from challenging "three of the basic concerns of historical thought: periodization, the categories of analysis, and theories of social change"(Ibid 809). This second dimension, challenging categories of historical thought, is the one pursued in this study.

feminist historiography as not just to insert women as subjects into historical study but “to redefine the mainstream within a given field.”<sup>25</sup>

As Scott reflected in 2011, this project has had uneven success.<sup>26</sup> Scott points out that feminist historical scholarship has been more successful in charting new territory in modern European and American history than in ancient, medieval, early modern, or non-Western history.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, scholars have had “far more success in introducing women into the picture than in reconceiving it in terms of gender.”<sup>28</sup> This dissertation makes a contribution along both these lines. By dealing with texts from Late Bronze Age Ugarit, this study broadens the chronological and regional scope of feminist historical

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<sup>25</sup> Hackett, “Women’s Studies and the Hebrew Bible,” 146. Hackett here draws on Peggy McIntosh’s model of five stages of feminist historical work that MacIntosh set forward in a conference lecture in 1983 (Ibid 144-146). Hackett writes that she would place her own work in the penultimate stage, “women *as* history,” in which the goal is to retrieve the history of women on its own terms (Ibid 145-146).

<sup>26</sup> Hackett’s own prognosis for the impact of feminist historiography on the field of biblical studies was pessimistic given the conservatism of the field (Ibid 161). Another contributing factor, beyond the conservatism of the field that Hackett notes, was that feminist scholarship in biblical studies turned in the direction of literary and theological analysis rather than a historiographic approach to women in ancient Israel. Susan Ackerman sketches out this turning point in terms of two critical articles published in the early 1970’s by Phyllis Trible and Phyllis Bird, the former being literary-theological in approach and the latter calling for a historical approach to biblical texts and the material culture of ancient Israel. Ackerman argues that subsequent feminist biblical scholars tended to pursue Trible’s focus rather than Bird’s for three reasons. The first was a turn in feminist studies toward literary analysis. The second was the growth in the same period of literary approaches in biblical studies. The third was the difficulty of pursuing historically oriented work on women which is posed both by the limitation of biblical texts as sources on women’s lives and by the challenge of correlating limited archaeological data with these texts. See Susan Ackerman, “Digging up Deborah: Recent Hebrew Bible Scholarship on Gender and the Contribution of Archaeology,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 66, no. 4 (2003) 172-184.

<sup>27</sup> Scott, “Feminism’s History,” 24.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks also notes the unevenness in the temporal and geographic scope of studies of women and gender, echoing Scott’s own terminology. She writes, “books on women’s experience or that use gender as a category of analysis in the twentieth-century United States or in early modern England, for example, number in the hundreds, while those that focus on Portugal or Pakistan in any period may be counted on the fingers of one hand,” Wiesner-Hanks, *Gender in History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001) 9.

scholarship.<sup>29</sup> On a conceptual level, this study seeks to move beyond previous studies that present data on women. Instead of simply offering information on the roles and status of royal women at Ugarit, the aim is to reconceive the Late Bronze Age political system in terms of the relationships between royal women and men.

The question of this dissertation is the one Scott formulates for historiographic work as a whole: “how does gender give meaning to the organization and perception of historical knowledge?”<sup>30</sup> Within the terms of our case studies this question becomes more specific: how does drawing out the gendered dynamics of a royal patrimonial system elucidate the significance of texts that bear on Ugarit’s political position within the Hittite imperial sphere? This study will show that an analysis of a limited group of texts in a specific time and place can contribute to a larger dialogue on gender and political history beyond the field of ancient Near Eastern studies. This study focuses on key moments of

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<sup>29</sup> In the field of ancient Near Eastern studies, archaeologists have undertaken innovative theoretical work concerning gender which makes a similar contribution, such as Diane Bolger, *Gender in Ancient Cyprus: Narratives of Social Change on a Mediterranean Island* (New York: Altamira Press, 2003). Bolger notes at the outset that her work is a response to what she considers to be “a blatant gap in the archaeological research of the ancient Near East that, despite the adoption of more theoretically based approaches over the last few decades, continues to marginalize gender in its treatment of the past”(xv). In a more recent collection, Bolger notes that a shift has taken place in the recognition of the importance of gender to historical analysis and archaeological work, in terms of both publications and scholarly meetings. See Bolger, ed. *Gender Through Time in the Ancient Near East* (New York: Altamira Press, 2008) 2-5. A major contribution to foregrounding work on gender in the field of ancient Near Eastern studies was the forty-seventh Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, the topic of which was “Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East.” See S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting, eds. *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East, Proceedings of the 47<sup>th</sup> Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2-6, 2001* (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002). While the approach of the papers and their topics were certainly heterogeneous, the conference was significant in that the chosen topic meant that major scholars, male and female, took up the topic of sex and gender. However, the genesis of the topic as described by the organizer Simo Parpola is telling. The initial motivation was to address sexuality as a response to popularized conceptions of Mesopotamia as a “wonderland of sex”(xiii). The organizers incorporated gender into this topic because “sex and gender might appeal to more people and generate more papers”(Ibid). Thus, while the organizers were cognizant of feminist academic movements within and outside of the field that would make gender an appealing topic, they considered gender as component of sexuality and sexual practice.

<sup>30</sup> Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” 1055.

conflict and rupture during Ugarit's history. At such moments of crisis, social patterns and expectations concerning women and men that might otherwise remain implicit in ancient texts are expressed in the competing interests of those involved in each case. The texts selected for this study are ones that reveal the stakes for women and men in the formation and dissolution of political alliances conceived in terms of gendered relationships.

In the field of ancient Near Eastern history, we can find a starting point for gender analysis in what might initially seem to be an unlikely quarter: patrimonialism as a political model. Building on prior work by Max Weber and Lawrence Stager, David Schloen has presented a vision of the patrimonial household as a model for understanding the social, economic, and political structure of Ugarit, as well as the symbolic system that undergirded it. Schloen argues that

An interlocking set of metaphors drawn from traditional household relationships-- "father," "son," "brother," "master," "servant," "heir," etc. each of which could evoke the root metaphor of the "house of the father" or could be evoked by it-- were creatively applied in a wide variety of situations beyond the ordinary household, serving to mediate and motivate social action of many kinds.<sup>31</sup>

Schloen's formulation of patrimonialism is provocative because of the way he understands the symbolic function of "the house of the father" as a root metaphor: the use of any singular relational term within this inventory evokes the rest. The phenomenon of a single relational term evoking an inventory of others in a symbolic system is the same principle upon which gender analysis rests. What Schloen and previous scholars have not

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<sup>31</sup> J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001) 1.

acknowledged is that the patrimonial household terms in which they conceive this model--"father," "son," "brother"--are gendered terms. Inasmuch as they draw their significance from a symbolic system based on biological and social reproduction, they depend on the unarticulated female markers--"mother," "wife," "sister," "daughter." The patrimonial political model, as Schloen articulates it, offers a potential basis for identifying the networks of relational identities that shaped ancient Near Eastern political systems, even if the use of this model in ancient Near Eastern studies has so far paid little attention to the female component. Gender analysis brings into focus the total set of relational identities involved in the patrimonial political model.

A gendered reading of a patrimonial model allows us to draw out what is implicit in a system previously only understood in terms of male relationships. As Scott argues, "gender is a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated."<sup>32</sup> Fatherhood as a political paradigm draws its material and symbolic force from the total set of relationships that produce paternity. The royal letters and imperial verdicts addressed in the three case studies of this dissertation include an inventory of household terms comprising the full spectrum of gendered relationships: "mother," "wife," "daughter," and "sister" as well as "father," "son," and "brother." Schloen considers these terms to constitute "the network of subsidiary symbols pertaining to household life and property . . . which were engendered by the root metaphor of the father's house."<sup>33</sup> However, in the texts that are the focus of the ensuing case studies, the terms "mother,"

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<sup>32</sup> Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," 1069.

<sup>33</sup> Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 54.

“wife,” “daughter,” and “sister” were not peripheral to or derivative of the positions of men in a patrimonial system. Rather, the capacity of a single royal woman to function simultaneously as daughter, sister, wife, and mother provided the basis for political relationships among multiple men. This is why conflicts concerning royal women, particularly in moments in which their status was in crisis, could generate large-scale regional disputes.

The conflict that generated the texts upon which two of my three case studies will focus was the dissolution of a marriage alliance between Ammistamru II, king of Ugarit, and the daughter of Bentešina, the king of Amurru, in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Members of the Hittite imperial family were implicated in the dispute, both as arbitrators and as stakeholders. The woman at the center of the case is identified as the wife of the king of Ugarit, the mother of his heir, and the daughter and sister of two successive kings of Amurru. Through her mother, she was also linked to the Hittite imperial line. Her mother was the Hittite princess, Gaššuliyawiya, the daughter of the Hittite Great King Hattušili III who married Bentešina as part of a vassal treaty between Bentešina and Hattušili III. Thus, the woman at the center of the case was the granddaughter of Hattušili III and the niece of Hattušili III’s successor, Tudḫaliya IV, the Hittite sovereign who arbitrated her case. This single woman in her multiple relational positions stood at the intersection of imperial and interregional alliances across three generations.

The case generated a dossier of Hittite imperial verdicts and regional accords that outnumber any other surviving group of texts at Ugarit that document a political incident. These texts reveal that royal households were constituted both by relationships forged by

the immediate parties to a marriage alliance and by the relationships such alliances created in subsequent generations. Women functioned on two axes. On the one hand, by virtue of their simultaneous roles as daughter, sister, and wife they provided points of contact between royal households. On the other hand, by virtue of their roles as mothers who could maintain their position as queen into the reign of their sons they mediated dynastic transitions across generations of male rulers.

This woman's position as wife of the king of Ugarit, daughter and sister of two kings of Amurru, and granddaughter and niece of two Hittite Great Kings was not an anomaly but rather an outcome of the standard practice of diplomatic marriages. Her position at the nexus of interregional and imperial-vassal alliances was a manifestation of the way women functioned within the dynastic system that they inhabited as the result of such marriages. The rupture of two relationships within this system, namely, her relationships as wife to the king of Ugarit and as mother to his heir, compromised all the others and created a conflict among the men whose alliances and mutual status her position brokered. What makes the conflict between Ammistamru II and his Amurrite wife unique historically speaking is the view that it offers into the inner workings of a political system that would otherwise remain implicit, as it is in the Ugaritic letters between royal mothers and sons that are the subject of our first case study. The fundamental difference between the Ugaritic letters and the Hittite imperial verdicts is the nature of the relationships in which the texts are situated. The Ugaritic letters are situated within the regular workings of relationships between royal mothers and sons, while the imperial verdicts record crises in such relationships.



In the first case study, Chapter One, I examine the letters in Ugaritic addressed by kings to their mothers. These letters are significant on several levels. They attest to the fact that royal women could maintain their positions as queens from the reigns of their husbands into the reigns of their sons. Furthermore, the forms of address and self-identification the king uses in relationship to his mother suggest a reciprocity in their political status. Finally, the letters from the king to his mother deal primarily with the king's diplomatic relations with the Hittite Great King and secondarily with military matters. These letters indicate that the mother of a king had a role to play or consultation to provide on Ugarit's foreign relations. However, because these letters were internal correspondence within the Ugaritic royal family, much information was assumed, including in most cases the names of the Ugaritic queens and kings and the names of the Hittite sovereigns. Thus, rather than attempting to assign these letters to a particular context or period, the goal of the analysis is to draw out patterns of relationship between the king and his mother. In the two subsequent case studies, these patterns of relationship will be viewed in light of the imperial verdicts in which historical context can be determined on the basis of the proper names of the rulers involved in each case.

In the second case study, Chapter Two, I extend the analysis of the relationships between royal women and their sons into the corpus of Hittite imperial verdicts. I contrast texts concerning two pairs of royal mothers and sons. In the case of the first pair, Ammistamru II and his mother Aḫatumilki, the ability of a royal woman to maintain her tenure as queen after the death of her husband benefited both herself and her son. The second pair of royal mothers and sons is Ammistamru II's wife, the daughter of Bentešina

and Gaššuliyawiya, and her son, Utrišarruma, Ammistamru II's heir. In this case, a royal woman's loss of position as queen undermined her son's and her male kinsmen's positions. These two sets of texts offer a view of how the patterns of relationship between royal mothers and sons implicit in the Ugaritic letters played out in specific, historically identifiable cases. The verdicts complement the internal perspective on diplomatic issues found in the Ugaritic letters between kings and their mothers with a view of royal mothers and sons from the perspective of the Hittite rulers.

In the third case study, Chapters Three and Four, I examine Hittite imperial verdicts and regional accords dealing with the divorce and execution of Ammistamru II's wife. As stated above, this case generated more legal decisions than any other event documented in texts from Ugarit. These verdicts and accords widen the scope of analysis from relationships between royal women and their sons to the full spectrum of relational positions possible between royal women and men: fathers and daughters, sisters and brothers, husbands and wives. The verdicts and accords also situate this wider network of relationships in the context of the Hittite imperial system in Syria in which Ugarit was enmeshed. The first half of the case study, Chapter Three, will examine the Hittite verdicts, and the second half, Chapter Four, will examine the accords between the kings of Ugarit and Amurru.

Close reading of the primary texts is the foundation of these case studies. This method is crucial to the objectives of this investigation. The letters and verdicts are laconic. The central work that they perform is to configure and reconfigure relationships, both by means of what is inscribed on the tablet and by the fact of their inscription. The

Ugaritic letters communicate as much in their manipulation of epistolary conventions and in the relational terms that identify sender and addressee as they do in the abbreviated messages they carry. The imperial verdicts are structured so as to put into effect the prohibitions, limitations, and rights that the imperial powers authorize. Both genres, letters and verdicts, are self-referential texts. The opening of a letter identifies the text as a message that must be spoken: *l. mlkt 'umy . rgm t̥m . mlk bnk*; “to the queen, my mother, say: message of the king, your son”(RS 11.872: 1-4).<sup>34</sup> The standard coda to a verdict is that if the person to whom the verdict is addressed tries to contest it, the tablet will overcome them: *šumma iraggum tuppū annū ile*”ēši; “if she tries to dispute, this tablet will overcome her”(RS 17.396: 18-19).<sup>35</sup> Yet the injunctions of the verdicts also communicate the counter-narratives that they are written to suppress. The prohibitions and limitations of the verdicts communicate the actions that might have otherwise occurred. Although they are addressed to particular moments of political rupture, in their assumptions and anxieties the verdicts reveal the standard expectations of royal women and men. The task of close reading is to draw out the anxieties, assumptions, and expectations that the texts encode.

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<sup>34</sup> Andrée Herdner, *Corpus des Tablettes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques Découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*, Mission de Ras Shamra 10, (Paris: Imprimeries Nationale and Klincksieck, 1963) no. 50. See also Dennis Pardee, “Further Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography,” *Archiv für Orientforschung*, 31 (1984): 223-225.

Syllabic transliterations of Ugaritic words in Akkadian texts from Ugarit, the usage of the three discrete signs for the glottal stop, and comparative Semitic data provide evidence for the vocalization of Ugaritic. Nonetheless, the vocalization of Ugaritic remains debated, and evidence for vowel quality and quantity is often equivocal. Discussion of Ugaritic phonology is beyond the purview of this study and would not substantively alter the understanding of the texts in question. Therefore, I will cite the Ugaritic letters in transliteration, not in linguistically reconstructed transcription.

<sup>35</sup> PRU IV: 127-128.

This task demands two main things from the reader. First, it requires awareness of the wider network of relationships in which Ugarit was imbedded. The name of a Hittite ruler in a verdict and the lineage he asserts can encode a history of conflict within Hatti and within the region over which the text asserts his authority. In the case studies, I will discuss the history evoked in particular texts. In what follows in this introduction, I will present an overview of the political framework in which the texts operate. In addition to an awareness of the political history of the period, the task of close reading requires attentiveness to the social and symbolic system evoked by the kinship terms that are central to the texts. Patrimonialism, as we have seen, is a model that has been put forward to explain the social and symbolic system expressed in kinship terms. I will assess whether patrimonialism as it has been conceived is sufficient to account for the relationships conveyed in these texts. I will first address the political framework in which the texts operate and then discuss the sufficiency of patrimonialism as a model, expanding on the remarks above. At the conclusion of the three case studies outlined above, I will propose how the patrimonial model might be reconceived in light of texts that concern relationships between royal women and men.

## **UGARIT IN ITS WORLD: SITUATING THE TEXTS**

The imperial legal verdicts and letters from Ugarit must be understood in light of Ugarit's unique position with regard to the Hittite imperial powers and its Syrian neighbors and in light of its considerable wealth as a center of trade. Ugarit was a

cosmopolitan site. While the majority of texts from Ugarit are written in Akkadian, the common diplomatic language of the period, and in the local language Ugaritic, six additional languages are also attested: Sumerian, Hittite, Luwian, Hurrian, Egyptian, and Cypro-Minoan. These eight languages were preserved in five writing systems: Sumero-Akkadian logosyllabic, the Ugaritic almost entirely consonantal alphabet, Luwian hieroglyphics, Egyptian hieroglyphs, and the Cypriot-Minoan syllabic systems.<sup>36</sup> All of these texts are from the Late Bronze Age levels. Ugarit is mentioned in texts ranging from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age from multiple foreign archives, including those of Emar, Mari, Alalah, Amarna, Hattuša, Emar, Aphek, and Egypt.<sup>37</sup>

This textual evidence is in accord with both the material culture and the geography of the site. Five different harbors in the borders of Ugarit carried on active trade along the whole spectrum of the eastern Mediterranean, from the Hittite regions to the north, south to Egypt, and due west to Cyprus, just 70 kilometers off the coast.<sup>38</sup> Ugarit was also positioned adjacent to a pass, by way of a river source, which led from the coast to inland Syria and Mesopotamia. Ugarit was a prime transit point for overland

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<sup>36</sup>Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009) 8.

<sup>37</sup> Itamar Singer, "Political History of Ugarit," 605. Ugarit appears famously in the Mari archives, indicating Ugarit's status and geographical reach. In one letter, the king of Yamḥad reports to Zimri-Lim, king of Mari, the king of Ugarit's wish to see the famous royal palace of Mari. A second letter reports on the visit of the king of Mari to Ugarit. See Mario Liverani, "*Ras Shamra, Histoire*," in *Supplément Au Dictionnaire De La Bible* ed. E. Cazelles Jacob, H. (Paris: Letouzey and Ané, 1979) 1296-1297 and 1329.

<sup>38</sup> Marian H. Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design: Luxury Arts and an "International Style" in the Ancient Near East, 1400-1200 BCE* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Liverani, "*Ras Shamra, Histoire*," 1329. Liverani points out that the power of the ports of Ugarit also lay in the fact that they were unrivalled points of access. The Levantine coast was not suitable for building ports to the north or south, up to Ura or down to Byblos.

Mesopotamian routes passing over the Euphrates at Karkamiš or Emar.<sup>39</sup> This meant that Ugarit generated significant wealth and also controlled access to goods. The model of “port power” that Lawrence Stager has articulated for coastal societies in the Early and Middle Bronze Ages would apply to the position Ugarit occupied in the Late Bronze Age.<sup>40</sup> As in this model, Ugarit was a point of integration between long-distance maritime trade and the “secondary networks oriented east-west along the natural drainage, wadi, or transport systems” and thereby served as the heart of a system of international commerce.<sup>41</sup> Given this position, Ugarit was able to exercise indirect power through economic ties, even within the framework of the rule of larger territorial powers.<sup>42</sup>

As Gary Beckman points out, Ugarit’s wealth and pivotal position in inter-regional trade networks made it a target for Egyptian, Hittite, and Assyrian expansion.<sup>43</sup> Such competition among the great powers heightened Ugarit’s importance in the region. Mario Liverani’s remarks on Ugarit’s commercial position indicate the consequence of

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<sup>39</sup> Liverani, “*Ras Shamra, Histoire*,” 1329. The journey between Emar and Ugarit was the shortest overland route from the Euphrates to the coast, and thus the most ideal for trade. See also Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, 16.

<sup>40</sup> Lawrence Stager, “Port Power in the Early and Middle Bronze Age: The Organization of Maritime Trade and Hinterland Production,” in *Studies in the Archaeology of Israel and Neighboring Lands in Memory of Douglas L. Esse*, S. R. Wolff ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) 625-638. Stager notes that his model “may apply equally well or better to other parts of the Mediterranean in the second and first millennia B.C.” (625).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid* 625.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid* 629. In applying Stager’s model to Ugarit, one must see the relationship of the local kings of Ugarit to the Egyptian or Hittite Great Kings as analogous to the one he sketches out for the relationship of import-export merchants to rulers operating on the basis of military and political power. From this perspective the fact that Ugarit would dare to hold up shipments of grain to Hatti or simply buy its way out of providing troops for the Hittite Great King makes sense. On these two points in Ugarit’s history, see the following discussion.

<sup>43</sup> Gary Beckman, “Ugarit and Inner Syria during the Late Bronze Age,” in *Le royaume d’Ougarit de la Crète à l’Euphrate: Nouveaux axes de recherche*, J. M. Michaud, ed. (Sherbrooke: G.G.C., 2007) 167.

imperial expansion. He argues that the prime reason for Ugarit's pivotal status was that it was the northernmost point of the Egyptian sphere and subsequently the only Syrian port under Hittite control.<sup>44</sup> In a sense, imperial expansion only made Ugarit more wealthy. Ugarit's increasing wealth is manifest in the expansion of the royal palace in a series of construction phases from the period of Egyptian expansion through the period of what Itamar Singer calls the "*pax Hethitica*."<sup>45</sup> By the 13<sup>th</sup> century the royal palace was "a huge complex containing some ninety rooms, five large courtyards and some smaller courts . . . measuring at its zenith some 120 m by 85 m."<sup>46</sup>

Artifacts from the royal palace attest to Ugarit's wealth, inter-regional reach, and the balance it continued to walk in its relations with Egypt and Hatti. Marian Feldman notes that a vase with the cartouche of the Egyptian king Horemheb and the seal of his contemporary, Murišili II of Hatti, were both found in the royal palace of Ugarit after Ugarit had officially become a Hittite vassal.<sup>47</sup> Additional royal items from Egypt have been found at Ugarit, dating from a later period: another cartouche on a vase, that of Ramses II, and an inscription on a bronze sword with cartouche of Merneptah.<sup>48</sup> Mario Liverani offers what has become a common understanding, that these later finds reflect

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<sup>44</sup> Liverani, "Ras Shamra, Histoire," 1329.

<sup>45</sup> Singer, "Political History of Ugarit," 646-650. See also Singer, "Syria after the Battle of Qadesh," in *The Calm Before the Storm: Selected Writings of Itamar Singer on the End of the Late Bronze Age in Anatolia and the Levant* (Atlanta: SBL, 2011 [2002]), 8-9.

<sup>46</sup> Adrian Curtis, "Ras Shamra, Minet El-Beida and ras Ibn Hani: the Material Sources," *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Wilfred G. E. Watson and Nicholas Wyatt (Boston: Brill, 1999)16.

<sup>47</sup> Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 186.

<sup>48</sup> Claude F. A. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica III: Sceaux et Cylindres Hittites, Épée Gravée du Cartouche de Mineptah, Tablettes Chypro-Minoennes et Autres Découvertes Nouvelles de Ras Shamra*, Mission de Ras Shamra 8 (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1956) fig. 121 and 169-178. [Here after Ug III.]

the resumption of trade between Ugarit and Egypt in the generations following the peace treaty between Ḫattušili III and Ramses II.<sup>49</sup> However, Feldman resists this interpretation because it does not explain the cartouche of Horemheb that predates the peace treaty, and she does not consider it likely that royal objects would be exchanged commercially. She instead views the Egyptian finds from these successive dynasties as evidence of ongoing relations between the courts of Egypt and Ugarit during Hittite rule. Given that Ugarit's political status in relation to both Egypt and Hatti came from its wealth and position as a center of trade, the lines between commerce and diplomacy may not be so finely drawn. That such objects were found in the royal palace at all indicates that Hittite vassalage did not hinder royal exchanges between Ugarit and Egypt.

In addition to these royal objects marked as originating in a specific place and period, other elite luxury goods found at Ugarit exhibit what Feldman terms “international koiné,” a hybrid visual vocabulary, characteristic of the Late Bronze Age, “which appears to intermix elements from various artistic traditions including Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Aegean.”<sup>50</sup> Feldman argues that Ugarit's multifaceted position as an equal with respect to neighbors such as Amurru, as a subordinate to the Hittite and Egyptian imperial powers, and as an overlord with respect to its own dependencies is reflected in the fact that these luxury goods moved through Ugarit in “various exchange systems in each of these relational modes: as gifts, commodities, and tribute.”<sup>51</sup> The legal verdicts discussed in the case studies in Chapters Two through Four offer another

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<sup>49</sup> Liverani, “Ras Shamra, Histoire,” 1312.

<sup>50</sup> Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 5.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid 18.



dimension of Ugarit's multifaceted political position, one situated in moments of regional conflict rather than in the diplomatic harmony maintained by such gift exchanges. These verdicts reveal the complex interrelationships among Ugarit, Amurru, and the Hittite imperial powers. Even as the Hittites exerted their prerogative as imperial arbitrators of disputes within Ugarit and between Ugarit and Amurru, they also submitted in remarkable ways to the demands of the Ugaritic king over against Amurru, even though Amurru was far more integrated into Hittite patterns of rule than Ugarit was. Feldman contends that while Ugarit never rose to the rank of the great powers in the region, "it also never fully subordinated itself to one power, at times behaving in a manner inconsistent with the obligations of subject polities."<sup>52</sup> The royal palace of Ugarit contained not only luxury goods marked with Egyptian royal insignia but also legal verdicts attesting to the fact that the king of Ugarit was capable of making claims against a more loyal Hittite vassal and against a royal women descended from the imperial line.

Ugarit's political leverage is also manifest in its control over the shipment of goods basic to human survival. In the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, when the population of Hatti was suffering a grain shortage and impending famine, Ugarit apparently held up a vital shipment of grain from Egypt to Hatti as reflected in an angry letter from the Hittite Great King reminding the king of Ugarit of his obligations to provide ships for this delivery (RS 20.212).<sup>53</sup> This situation manifests Hatti's weakening position, but it is also a

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Emmanuel Laroche, Jean Nougayrol, Charles Vroilleaud, and Claude F. A. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica V, Nouveaux Textes Accadiens, Hourrites et Ugaritiques des Archives et Bibliothèques Privées d'Ugarit, Commentaires des Textes Historiques*, Mission de Ras Shamra 16 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale-P.

development of what Bordreuil and Pardee have termed Ugarit's strategy of "passive resistance."<sup>54</sup> The authors allude here to Liverani's characterization of Ugarit's "*tendance au désengagement*" whereby Ugaritic rulers avoided military involvement through payment in gold or silver.<sup>55</sup> Whereas Liverani sees this as a sign of a state that is economically strong and militarily weak, Pardee and Bordreuil view this as "an attitude of minimal cooperation with the Hittite overlord."<sup>56</sup> Both these aspects of Ugarit's position undoubtedly had a role to play in their dealings with the Hittites and their neighbors.

The most pronounced example of Ugarit's non-compliance with the standard expectations of Hittite vassals and of its leveraging of wealth in lieu of military service occurred in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century, under the reign of Ammistamru II, the Ugaritic king at the center of the two major case studies of this dissertation. For a payment of 50 minas of gold, Ammistamru II was exempted from a primary duty of a Hittite vassal, to send troops to aid the Hittite king in war. He sent neither infantry nor chariotry to the Hittite Great King Tudḫaliya IV in the latter's conflict with Assyria, and the treaty protected him against any future reprisals by the Great King (RS 17.059).<sup>57</sup> This military treaty between Ammistamru II and Tudḫaliya IV shares many features with the legal verdicts concerning Ammistamru II's repudiated wife to be discussed in Chapters Three and Four. In the

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Geuthner, 1968) no. 33. See Liverani, "*Ras Shamra, Histoire*," 1312 and Singer, "Political History of Ugarit," 650.

<sup>54</sup> Bordreuil and Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, 12.

<sup>55</sup> Liverani, "*Ras Shamra, Histoire*," 1311.

<sup>56</sup> Bordreuil and Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, 13.

<sup>57</sup> PRU IV: **150-2**.

military treaty, Ammistamru II paid Tudḫaliya IV 50 minas of gold to be released from his military obligations as a vassal. In the final verdicts concerning Ammistamru II's divorce, the king made another payment in gold in exchange for the authority to execute his wife, Tudḫaliya IV's niece.

The Hittite affiliation of Ammistamru II's wife is a manifestation of the method of Hittite rule in Syria and the differing ways in which the imperial agenda played out in practice in the region. Šuppiluliuma I's Syrian conquests in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century dramatically changed the balance of power in the region. Up until this point, the northern and southern regions of Syria were within the spheres of two territorial powers: Mittani in northern Syria and Egypt in the South. Internal conflicts within Mittani and Egypt offered an opportunity for the Hittite king Šuppiluliuma I to attempt a raid within Syria.<sup>58</sup> Šuppiluliuma I ultimately defeated and superseded the rule of Mittani. Šuppiluliuma I's conquests along with simultaneous Assyrian invasions left Mittani devastated and in the throes of interdynastic conflict. Šuppiluliuma I gave refuge to Šattiwaza, the deposed Mittanian ruler, and returned him to his throne as a Hittite vassal and ally against Assyria. As a part of the vassal treaty with Šattiwaza, Šuppiluliuma I formed a marriage alliance between his daughter and Šattiwaza.

Such imperial-vassal marriages were a prime political strategy of the Hittites in the New Kingdom period ushered in by Šuppiluliuma I.<sup>59</sup> The Hittite Great Kings

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<sup>58</sup> Horst Klengel, *Syria, 3000 to 300 B.C. : A Handbook of Political History* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992) 109.

<sup>59</sup> The primary study of imperial-vassal marriages is Franco Pintore, *Il Matrimonio interdinastico nel Vicino Oriente durante i Secoli xv-xiii*, *Orientis Antiqui Collectio*; 14 (Roma: Istituto per l'Oriente : Centro per le antichità e la storia dell'arte del Vicino Oriente, 1978). See further discussion in Chapter Three.

understood the betrothal of their daughters to vassal kings as a way of securing loyalty. The standard stipulation of all imperial-vassal marriages was that the descendants of the Hittite royal woman would have perpetual claim to the throne of the vassal kingdom. In this way the prestige and rule of the Hittite king were mediated through his daughter. This practice continued into the 13<sup>th</sup> century with the marriage between the daughter of the Hittite Great King Hattušili III and king Bentešina of Amurru. A daughter of this union became Ammistamru II's wife, the short-lived queen of Ugarit. Ammistamru II, in divorcing and putting to death this daughter of an imperial-vassal marriage between a Hittite royal woman and king of Amurru, struck a blow against the fundamental structure of Hittite rule in the region.

Another dimension of this case is the way that the legal verdicts it generated manifest the pragmatic aspects of Hittite rule in Syria. When Šuppiluliuma I had established control of the region, he made his son Piyašilli, under the Hurrian throne name Šarrukušuh, king in Karkamiš and Hittite viceroy in Syria. This appointment inaugurated a long-term system in which the kings of Karkamiš represented Hittite interests and arbitrated among Syrian vassals.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, direct Hittite rule within the region through the kings of Karkamiš was a way to prevent Egyptian encroachment in the region and maintain a hold over the “fluctuating loyalties” of the Syrian kingdoms.<sup>61</sup> A major source for establishing the lineage of the kings in Karkamiš and their role in Syria in the 13<sup>th</sup> century is the legal verdicts from Ugarit, particularly those concerning

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<sup>60</sup> Klengel, *Syria*, 113-114, 121.

<sup>61</sup> Trevor Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, New ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) 180.

Ammistamru II and his Amurrite wife. This dossier is of primary importance both because of its size and variety and because the Hittite Great King and the king of Karkamiš arbitrated the verdicts. Among the six imperial verdicts issued concerning the case, two were issued by Initešub, king of Karkamiš, and three were issued by the Hittite Great King, Tudḫaliya IV. The remaining verdict is too fragmentary to assign to either.

This collection of texts is essential in answering the two questions Wilfred van Soldt identifies as the most important with regard to Hittite rule in Syria:

The first question concerns the division of tasks between the great king and his viceroy over Syria, the king of Karkamiš. The second question has to do with the room of manoeuvre that was left to the vassals, to what extent were they able to act without outside interference and which matters had to be submitted for royal assent at the courts in Karkamiš and Hattuša.<sup>62</sup>

In the case of this dossier, the verdicts of the Hittite Great King concern the royal succession in Ugarit and imminent life-and-death conflict between the two vassal kings of Ugarit and Amurru. Van Soldt argues that the primary concern of the Great King was “that the possible damage to the stability of Syria caused by this affair (be) kept to a minimum.”<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, van Soldt observes that the Karkamiš verdicts concern more practical matters: what goods the exiled queen can take with her back to Amurru and what the conditions of her exile will be.<sup>64</sup> In sum, the importance of this case is evident in the fact that the majority of the issues it presented were of concern to the Hittite Great King. Although van Soldt does not ultimately address the second question

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<sup>62</sup> W. H. van Soldt, "Ugarit as a Hittite Vassal State," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 37 (2010):199.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid 202.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid 203.

about vassal maneuver, we shall see in the following case studies that Ammistamru II achieved remarkable room for maneuver even in the midst of a tightly controlled dispute.

## **WOMEN AT AMARNA, WOMEN AT UGARIT**

The imperial legal verdicts and letters from Ugarit offer a view from within a complex commercial and political system. Such a perspective is matched only by the Amarna letters, which have been mined as the primary source for reconstructing the diplomatic relationships among the Great Powers of the Late Bronze Age in the period immediately preceding the one attested at Ugarit. These letters offer background on the political world in which Ugarit was enmeshed prior to the expansion of the Hittite empire in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century. The diplomatic dynamics manifested in the Amarna letters also provide essential parallels for those at work in Ugarit, particularly with regard to royal women. The term “Great Powers” refers in Amarna to the rulers of the major territorial states of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> to mid-14<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE: Egypt, Mittani, Babylonia, Hatti, and Assyria. These rulers identified themselves as “Great King,” “*šarru rabû*,” in distinction to the lesser kings whose polities were under their rule. Most of the letters of the Great Kings found at Amarna were sent to the Egyptian rulers Amenhotep III and Akhenaten. Since Amarna, the capital established by Akhenaten, lasted only for the extent of his rule the letters present a picture of an international system at a precise point in history.

In the Amarna letters the Great Kings indicated their shared status by addressing each other through the idiom of brotherhood.<sup>65</sup> This form of address represented both a thought system and a political strategy. Raymond Cohen maintains that, “Great Kings thought of themselves as entering into a fraternal relationship when they established diplomatic ties.”<sup>66</sup> He claims further that, “When Great Kings called each other ‘brother,’ appealed to past and present family ties, and negotiated dynastic marriages, this was literally the way they understood the working of the international system.”<sup>67</sup> However, Liverani argues that the letters “belong to the class of persuasive messages . . . and their statements cannot be taken at face value, as statements of fact.”<sup>68</sup> Brotherhood in this sense was a code by which expectations of reciprocity, especially on the level of material exchanges, could be expressed and negotiated. The rhetoric of “friendship,” “love,” “good relationship,” and “concord” couched in the framework of brotherhood was usually accompanied by the demand for reciprocity in the exchange of luxury goods and high-value materials such as precious stones and the gold exclusively available from Egypt.<sup>69</sup>

Scholars who understand the use of the term “brotherhood” as a political metaphor in these letters consider diplomatic marriages to have been a means of

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<sup>65</sup> Raymond Cohen argues that by “family,” they would have understood the extended family in which several kinds of brotherhood might obtain involving a range of conflict and fidelity: for instance, competition between younger brothers and older brothers. See Cohen, “All in the Family: Ancient Near Eastern Diplomacy,” *International Negotiation* 1 (1996): 14 and 21-25.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid 14.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid 21.

<sup>68</sup> Liverani, “The Great Powers Club,” in Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook, *Amarna Diplomacy : The Beginnings of International Relations* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Univeristy Press, 2000) 17.

<sup>69</sup> Carlo Zaccagnini, “The Interdependence of the Great Powers,” *Amarna Diplomacy*, 144-145.

literalizing the metaphor by providing “actual” kinship ties.<sup>70</sup> Such an assessment, however, does not consider the fact that kinship is a culturally produced system of relatedness. The bonds based on marriage and biological reproduction are as much cultural phenomena as the bonds constructed through a political system.<sup>71</sup> The culturally variable conception of marriage and kinship can be demonstrated within the Amarna letters themselves. The Egyptian rulers conceived of and represented diplomatic marriages to their own population not as the means of forming of kinship alliances but as tribute. The prime example of this phenomenon is the contrast between the way that Tušratta, Great King of Mittani, represented the marriage of his sister Giluḥepa to Amenhotep III and the way Amenhotep III represented the marriage to his subjects.

When Tušratta secured his father’s throne after a period of civil war, his overture to Amenhotep III for a renewal of alliance characterized the Egyptian’s king marriage to his sister during his father’s reign as the basis for their “brotherhood.”<sup>72</sup> However, as Betsy Bryan points out, the marriage scarab produced in Egypt to commemorate the union of Amenhotep III and Giluḥepa told a very different story. The scarab names Amenhotep III’s Egyptian wife Tiye as the great royal wife and Giluḥepa as one of the marvels that were brought to him from Mittani. Indeed, Bryan claims that Tiye “may be

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<sup>70</sup> Liverani states that “the actual practice of intermarriage among the royal houses made the ‘brotherhood’ terminology something more than an abstract metaphor” (Liverani, “The Great Powers Club,” 18). In the same volume Samuel Meier writes, “real kinship resulted from such marriages between the Great Kings” (Meier, “Diplomacy and International Marriages,” *Amarna Diplomacy*, 168. Feldman writes, “the abstract concept of ‘brotherhood’ recast military and diplomatic alliances in terms of kinship, which found literal expression in interdynastic marriages” (Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 15). Emphasis mine.

<sup>71</sup> As shall be discussed below, in the next section of the introduction, this insight has been central to developments in the anthropological study of kinship. See Janet Carsten, *After Kinship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 18-20.

<sup>72</sup> EA 17: 1-29.



said to have participated with Amenhotep III in the diplomatic alliance.”<sup>73</sup> One can read the use of the term “brother” in the Amarna letters in the context of diplomatic marriage as an effort to assert not so much the “natural bonds” deriving from marriage, but a culturally-bound meaning of marriage which carried with it political expectations.

What the Ugaritic sources offer that the Amarna letters do not is a picture of what happened to the royal women involved in diplomatic marriage after they were sent to their new courts. Two interdynastic marriages from the Late Bronze Age are documented with texts that list goods and personnel accompanying a royal woman to a new court. The first is the marriage of Taduḥepa, the daughter of Tušratta, the king of Mittani, to Amenhotep III (EA 22 and 25).<sup>74</sup> The second is the marriage of Aḫatumilki, the royal woman from Amurru who became Ammistamru II’s mother, to Niqmepa, king of Ugarit

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<sup>73</sup> Betsy Bryan, “The Egyptian Perspective on Mittani,” *Amarna Diplomacy*, 79-81, at 81.

<sup>74</sup> Pintore and Zaccagnini disagree as to the nature and function of the gifts from Tušratta to Amenhotep III on the occasion of Taduḥepa’s marriage listed in EA 22. See Franco Pintore, *Il Matrimonio Interdinastico* and Carlo Zaccagnini, “On Late Bronze Age Marriages,” in *Studi in Onore di Edda Bresciani*, ed. S. Pernigotti S. F. Bondi, F. Serra, A. Vivian (Pisa: Giardini, 1985) 593-605. The debate hinges on the understanding of the final term that refers to the list itself, “*annūti* NĪ.BA.MEŠ MĪ.ÚS.MEŠ” (EA 22:43). Pintore understands these to be *terḥatu*, “bride price,” understood as items given by the groom to the bride’s family, which would revert back to the groom’s patrimony. However, as Zaccagnini points out, the statement in which this term is set is that Tušratta, the father of the bride, has given the items to Amenhotep III. Rather than “*terḥatu*,” Zaccagnini prefers the translation “marriage gifts.” Zaccagnini notes also that Pintore’s interpretation conflicts with the inventory of terms used in the Mittani correspondence: “*terḥatu*, always written syllabically, to be sent from Amenophis, Akkadian *mulūgu* and Hurrian *niḥari* “dowry”, sent from Mitanni” (596). Zaccagnini understands NĪ.BA.MEŠ MĪ.ÚS.MEŠ to be within the functional range of “dowry,” that is, a form of marriage gift, but in this case one given as a counter gift to the *terḥatu*, which he understands to be the gold given by Amenhotep III to Tušratta. This interpretation accounts for the “masculine” character of the gifts. In either case, EA 25 should be understood to contribute only to the status of Taduḥepa in the sense of the value of her marriage for Amenhotep III, not for her own enrichment in Egypt. The more likely candidate for the “dowry” Tušratta refers to in EA 24 is this long list of precious goods and personnel which are identified as *mulūgu* in EA 25. Thus Moran understood EA 25, albeit with the qualification that *mulūgu* may or may not have referred to a part of the dowry over which the wife retained control (*The Amarna Letters*, 25, 83-84).

(RS 16.146-161).<sup>75</sup> The difference in the textual context of these lists is indicative of the contribution that texts from Ugarit make to understanding diplomatic marriage. The lists associated with Taduḥepa are set in the context of the continuing correspondence between her father Tušratta and Amenhotep III. The perspective that these letters offer is the significance of the marriage for the men involved in the exchange. The case of Aḫatumilki is quite the reverse. There is no epistolary context for the exchange and no clear evidence exists for who her father was. The lists of goods associated with her marriage may rather be put into context with the texts that detail her subsequent life within Ugarit: her economic transactions as queen (RS 16.197, RS 16.348)<sup>76</sup> and her defense of her son's rule (RS 17.352, RS 17.035).<sup>77</sup>

In Tušratta's letters, the significance of Taduḥepa's marriage and the goods that accompany her lies in their potential to promote Tušratta's status in Egypt. In the long letter written in Hurrian from Tušratta to Amenhotep III, Tušratta anticipates the moment when his daughter and her dowry will be presented in Egypt.

And now when the wife of my brother comes, when she shows herself to my brother . . . And the entire land may my brother assemble, and may all other lands and the nobles (and) all envoys be present. And may they show his dowry to my brother, and they may spread out everything in the view of my brother . . . And may my brother take all the nobles and all the envoys and all the other lands and the war charioteers whom my brother desires and may my brother go. And may he spread out the dowry and may it be pleasing. (EA 24: III 21-34)

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<sup>75</sup> PRU III: 182-6.

<sup>76</sup> PRU III: 150-1, 162.

<sup>77</sup> PRU IV: 121-4.

The display of the wedding gifts accompanying his daughter is intended to elevate Tušratta's position in the eyes of the Egyptian Great King and his nobles, as well as in the eyes of representatives of other lands in the Egypt court. The exchange is a transaction between two kings and a means of a king establishing his status before a wider audience. Furthermore, Tušratta goes on to list the previous dowries sent to Egypt: the dowry of his sister Giluḥepa whom his father Šuttarna II gave to Amenhotep III and the dowry of Šuttarna II's sister, whom Tušratta's grandfather, Aratatama I, gave to Amenhotep II's father, Thutmose IV. Tušratta claims that the gifts he has bestowed are ten times what his grandfather had given to Amenhotep II's father. Clearly, in Tušratta's understanding these are not offers of tribute, but wealth intended to mark alliances and enhance the power and prestige of the one who bestows it.<sup>78</sup>

In letters subsequent to his bestowal of his daughter, Tušratta addresses Amenhotep III both as brother and as son-in-law. Here again the political terms in which a royal man defines himself depend on the status of women, in this case, Giluḥepa and Taduḥepa. For Tušratta, his sister's and daughter's marriages to the Egyptian Great King give him political leverage as a "brother" and "father-in-law." However, as discussed above, for the Egyptian Great King, Giluḥepa's and Taduḥepa's positions as his wives do not grant Tušratta special status. The conflict in their understandings of the significance of Giluḥepa's and Taduḥepa's positions for Tušratta plays out in subsequent negotiations between the two kings. Tušratta makes a unique demand of Amenhotep III on the basis of

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<sup>78</sup> As Zaccagnini notes in discussing this passage, "the reciprocal fame and prestige that redound to donors for sending presents to foreign courts are magnified in the eyes of international audiences if the receiver celebrates the arrival of gift bearing messengers"(Zaccagnini, "The Interdependence of the Great Powers," 152).

the latter's marriage to the former's daughter. While most of the Great Kings who corresponded with the Egyptian court demand gold, Tušratta requests that a golden statue of his daughter, along with one of himself, be sent from Egypt to Mittani.<sup>79</sup> This request constitutes a demand not simply for valuable resources but for visual confirmation of his and his daughter's elevated status as the result of the marriage alliance. To display within Mitanni a statue of himself and his daughter in the material most precious to and characteristic of Egypt would be to display an embodiment of the success he had achieved for himself through his daughter.

When the statues arrived, however, they were simply gold-plated wood, a fact revealed ironically in the letter Tušratta wrote to Tiye, Amenhotep III's Egyptian wife whom Tušratta acknowledges as "mistress of Egypt."<sup>80</sup> Tušratta's acknowledgement of Tiye as "mistress of Egypt" signals his awareness that Taduḥepa had not attained the level of prestige in Egypt that he would have sought to represent in Mittani or that his lavish display of wealth was intended to achieve.<sup>81</sup> The fruitlessness of Tušratta's assertion of his daughter's status and his own is also manifested in the fact that his demands for the statues outlive Amenhotep III himself. The letter to Tiye is a request that she intercede with her son Akhenaten, the new king, on his behalf so that he will send

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<sup>79</sup> EA 24: III, 90-92, 102-107 and EA 27: 19-27.

<sup>80</sup> EA 26: 1, 30-48; also, EA 27: 32-34.

<sup>81</sup> EA 20: 8-13 communicates Tušratta's expectation that Taduḥepa will become "mistress of Egypt." I concur with Moran's statement that "Tušratta's daughter was not going to replace Tiye and Tušratta certainly knew it" (Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 49, n.2). I would argue that Tušratta's claim should be read as an even grander effort to assert his status, beyond simply identifying himself as Amenhotep III's father-in-law. The effort is ultimately to assert the parity of his own kingdom with Egypt. Tušratta declares that on the day his daughter assumes her role as mistress of Egypt, Mittani and Egypt will be one (EA 20:17).

solid gold statues of himself and Taduḥepa.<sup>82</sup> He persists in this request in a letter to Akhenaten, in which he sends greetings to Taduḥepa, whom he refers to as Akhenaten's wife.<sup>83</sup> Clearly Taduḥepa remained in the Egyptian court, through the reigns of two Great Kings, but the letters do not reveal information about her life there beyond her father's persistent efforts to assert his position relative to Amenhotep III and Akhenaten based on her status as wife. She did not attain the status of "mistress of Egypt" nor did her son become king, but we know little other than this.

The case of Aḥatumilki, the royal woman from Amurru who became the wife of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit, is the reverse of Taduḥepa's. No records of marriage negotiations or letters from Aḥatumilki's father to Niqmepa survive. The only way to contextualize the list of goods and personnel that accompanied Aḥatumilki from Amurru to Ugarit is to see them in reference to her own position as it developed in Ugarit. Like Taduḥepa, Aḥatumilki remained in the court into which she married through the reigns of two kings. However, the second king of Ugarit, Niqmepa's successor Ammistamru II, was not the son of another woman, but her own. Unlike Taduḥepa, Aḥatumilki achieved and maintained the position of queen from the reign of her husband into the reign of her son. The nature of the surviving texts from Ugarit allows us to construct a new narrative for the significance of a diplomatic marriage and the transfer of goods it involved. Rather than the perspective of a father or husband, the texts from Ugarit offer a narrative from the perspective of a royal woman. As Feldman points out, the list of goods associated

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<sup>82</sup> EA 26: 49-57.

<sup>83</sup> EA 27:1-6.

with Aḥatumilki's marriage to Niqmepa is similar in type and in the manner of recording to those associated with Taduḥepa's marriage.<sup>84</sup> However, the text from Ugarit identifies the goods as Aḥatumilki's "belongings," *unūte*.MEŠ (RS 16.146-161: 1), not as her husband's as in the case of Taduḥepa.

This aspect of the text allows it to be read productively with the later texts from Aḥatumilki's reign in Ugarit that attest to transactions in which she continued to accrue wealth. RS 16.197 records a land transfer in the name of her son, Ammistamru II, as king, but the transaction is sealed with her personal seal.<sup>85</sup> RS 16.348 records the transfer of a man from the service of a certain Ibiranu to a position as an official or advisor (*mūdû*) to the queen.<sup>86</sup> The precise context of these transactions is elusive, but they offer a view of a royal woman, who brought considerable wealth with her from Amurru, involved in a network of landownership and the management of personnel within Ugarit that extended into the reign of her son. The transactions involved in her wedding provided a basis for the continued acquisitions that supported her position within Ugarit. The significance of the diplomatic marriage in this case is the opportunity it presented for a royal woman to advance her interests and, as evident in subsequent texts, the interests of her son. The imperial legal verdicts RS 17.352 and RS 17.035, which shall be discussed in Chapter Two, attest to the authority Aḥatumilki continued to exercise after

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<sup>84</sup> Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 108. One should note an error in Feldman's discussion of the text. She writes that the goods are "given on the occasion of the marriage between the Amurrite princess Ahat-Milku to Ammistamru II." The marriage was to Niqmepa; Ammistamru II was Aḥatumilki's son.

<sup>85</sup> PRU III: 150.

<sup>86</sup> PRU III: 162.

her husband's death, both within Ugarit and in an interregional forum.<sup>87</sup> The texts record a crime committed by two of Aḥatumilki's sons against herself and her son the king, likely an act that threatened his rule. The imperial verdict records and endorses her exile of these sons to Cyprus. In both verdicts, her status is not defined in terms of the men who brokered her marriage-- her father, the king of Amurru, and her husband, the king of Ugarit-- but by the position she herself held as queen and mother of the king.

The texts from Ugarit thus offer the opportunity to push the analysis of international politics beyond the transactions among royal men and see these transactions from the perspective of the royal women without whom such alliances could not have taken place. This shift in perspective throws into relief both the terms on which royal men sought to position themselves at the time of the marriage and the long-term consequences of diplomatic marriage for future royal men. This new perspective requires that the inventory of political terms be expanded beyond "father," "son," and "brother" to incorporate the correlative terms "daughter," "mother," and "sister," without which the male terms would have no meaning. With this insight in mind, we turn to an assessment of the patrimonial household as model for political relationships.

## **THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER**

Kinship terms in the Ugaritic letters and the imperial verdicts express relationships that were both familial and political. Max Weber's work on patriarchalism

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<sup>87</sup> PRU IV: 121-123.

and patrimonialism has offered a resource for interpreting native terminology for social and political structure in the Late Bronze and Iron Age Levant. Lawrence Stager and David Schloen have elaborated Weber's patrimonial model in the context of ancient Israel and Ugarit, respectively. In what follows, I will bring Schloen's conception of the patrimonial household model at Ugarit into dialogue with work on gender relations in the anthropological study of kinship. The intersection of these approaches offers a new vision of how royal women and men functioned in relationship to each other and of how royal men understood the political positions they held by virtue of their relationships to royal women. This reconception of the patrimonial model is borne out by close readings of the texts in the series of case studies that constitute the work of this dissertation.

David Schloen has proposed that the patriarchal household was both a social unit and a symbol that organized political relations at the level of the state on a functional and conceptual level. That is, the lived experience of the domestic patriarchal household gave form and meaning to corporate political relationships.<sup>88</sup> Schloen argues that the use of male kinship terms such as father, brother, and son along with terms such as lord, servant, and king is indicative of the fact that the "metaphoric extension of kinship provides the administrative structure of the patrimonial state."<sup>89</sup> Relational categories drawn from household life, both of kinship and of service, provided categories through which political relationships functioned. Furthermore, when enacted at the level of the state,

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<sup>88</sup> See Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 16. Schloen argues that the "house of the father" is a structuring symbol "rooted in an immediate life-world of everyday lived experience" which "take(s) on a life of (its) own as part of what may be studied scientifically as the 'objective' environment of individual social action."

<sup>89</sup> Ibid 70.



relational categories such as father, son, master, and servant achieved a symbolic power that in turn reinforced the mundane social patterns from which they were drawn.

Schloen's work builds on Max Weber's conception of the patrimonial state and Lawrence Stager's extension of Weber's model into Iron Age society in Israel.<sup>90</sup>

In Weber's formulation, the fundamental aspect of patrimonialism, in distinction from other forms of governance, is that it "lacks above all the bureaucratic separation of the 'private' and the 'official' sphere."<sup>91</sup> The power of the ruler is conceived on the model of household authority in which all members of the household--women, children, and servants--are the property of the "master" of the house.<sup>92</sup> In this sense, Weber's model is a perfect example of Joan Scott's argument that "gender is a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated."<sup>93</sup> The relationship between the ruler and his subordinates is based on the presumed relationships between men and women within a household. Weber attributes the domination of the father in the patriarchal household in

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<sup>90</sup>Max Weber, "Patriarchalism and Patrimonialism," in *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds., Hans Gerth et al. trans., vol 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) 1006-1069. Lawrence E. Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel," *Bulletin for the American Schools of Oriental Research* 260 (1985) 1-35. Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001). Lawrence E. Stager, "The Patrimonial Kingdom of Solomon," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age Through Roman Palaestina* (ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2003) 63-74. In this most recent work, Stager addresses directly patrimonialism as a symbolic system with reference to the work of Eric Voegelin. Stager cites Voegelin's observation that "the self-illumination of a society through symbols is an integral part of social reality . . . for through such symbolization the members of a society experience it as more than an accident or a convenience; they experience it as of their human essence." Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952): 27, cited in Stager, "The Patrimonial Kingdom of Solomon," 70. Stager argues that archaeological data as well as texts must be used "to understand the meaning of the symbols by which societies represent themselves," which in the case of ancient Israel are symbols drawn from the patrimonial household (70).

<sup>91</sup> Weber, "Patriarchal and Patrimonial Domination," in *Economy and Society*, 1028.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid 1007.

<sup>93</sup> Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," 1069.

most cases to social factors, such as the habituation of servants to a system in which their submission earns them protection. However, in the case of women, Weber claims that “the woman is dependent because of the normal superiority of the physical and intellectual energies of the male”<sup>94</sup> As Julia Adams puts it, “Weber biologizes the relative position of women and men in the context of an explanation that is otherwise social.”<sup>95</sup> In Lawrence Stager and David Schloen’s elaborations of Weber’s patrimonial model, the relations between women and men upon which Weber’s analogy of household and state depends disappear altogether.

In light of native terminology found in the Hebrew Bible, Stager extended Weber’s model of the patrimonial state into a three-tiered system of domestic, royal, and divine “households,” all governed along patriarchal lines by a male ruler. On the domestic level, this model is expressed in native terminology as the “house of the father,” in Hebrew, the “*bêṭ ’ab*.” On the level of the state, as in Weber’s model, Stager argues that “the king functions as *paterfamilias*, his subjects dependent on personal relationships and loyalty to him, in return for which allegiance they expect protection and succor.”<sup>96</sup> The king was in this sense the householder of the households that made up his territory. This conception of the king is central to Stager’s argument that, in Iron Age Israel, kingship was not a deviation from tribal governance but rather an extension of the

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<sup>94</sup> Weber, “Patriarchalism and Patrimonialism,” in *Economy and Society* 1007.

<sup>95</sup> Julia Adams, “The Rule of the Father: Patriarchy and Patrimonialism in Early Modern Europe,” in *Max Weber’s Economy and Society: A Critical Companion*, ed. Charles Camic et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005) 239.

<sup>96</sup> Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 4.

familial and kinship ties upon which tribal affiliation was based.<sup>97</sup> Stager argues further that the apex of this social model was not the king but the deity envisioned as “the supreme patrimonial lord.”<sup>98</sup>

Schloen’s innovation in this stream of scholarship is his analysis of how and why such patterns of relationship can be generalized from everyday domestic life to the level of the state and finally even to the symbolic realm of human experience. Schloen argues that relationships between fathers and sons, and masters and servants, which constitute the patrimonial household, are “structuring symbols rooted in an immediate life-world of everyday experience.”<sup>99</sup> They then “take on a life of their own as part of what may be studied as the ‘objective’ environment of individual social action, being inculcated as normative constraints on action through the process of socialization.”<sup>100</sup> Schloen sees the symbolic dimensions of the household unit not only as providing constraints on human action but also as generative of human action. From this perspective, the “house of the father” is “a structuring symbol of social order that is comprehensible only in terms of the subjectively meaningful motivations that give rise to social action.”<sup>101</sup> The stakes of Schloen’s assessment of what relationships constitute the household are thus very high, as

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<sup>97</sup> Stager, “The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel,” 25. Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 5.

<sup>98</sup> Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 4-5. Stager’s vision of the Israelite deity as the supreme kinsman draws from the work of Frank Moore Cross, in particular his essay, “Kinship and Covenant in Ancient Israel,” in his *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998) 3-21.

<sup>99</sup> Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 16.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid 44.

in his view they constitute both the patterns of rule on the level of the state and the organizing conceptual framework through which a society reproduces itself.

The weakness of Schloen's model is that the categories of relatedness upon which his analysis rests are conveyed only in terms of male relationships within a household unit: father, son, brother, master, and servant.<sup>102</sup> While "the house of the father" is an inherently gendered concept of social organization, neither Stager nor Schloen considers the relationships between women and men that reproduce and perpetuate the household unit on a domestic level or on the level of the state. To limit the "life-world of everyday experience" to the everyday experience of men and of men's relationships with each other is to ignore the role of women in the mechanics of physical reproduction and the mechanisms of social reproduction, without which the kinship systems that produce the positions of father, son, and brother could not exist. If patrimonialism is, as Schloen argues, a symbolic system "rooted in the concrete social experience of family and household life,"<sup>103</sup> women are as fundamental to the symbolic function of patrimonialism as they are fundamental to the material life of households. The questions that face any reconstruction of political life at Ugarit are not whether women were part of the patrimonial system, but in what manner they were part of it and how their exercise of authority shaped the system itself.

Weber's discussion of the patriarchal household, which serves as the basis for his theory of patrimonialism, offers a starting point for articulating the role of gender

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<sup>102</sup> In his entire study, Schloen's only consideration of women within patrimonial households is his observation that the position of wives or daughters are "subsidiary symbols," which are "engendered by the root metaphor of the father's house"(54).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid 46.

relations on a domestic and political level. Weber argues that marriage is not simply the “mere combination of sexual union and socialization agency involving father, mother, and children. The concept of marriage can be defined only with reference to other groups and relationships besides these.”<sup>104</sup> Weber identifies two such groups and relationships: first, the kinship groups among whom ties of obligation or premises for conflict are engendered when marriages are successfully or unsuccessfully brokered between them; second, the set of relationships of a larger collective to which offspring may be admitted as equal members by virtue of a recognized marriage. As Weber indicates, his conception of marriage leads into “the anthropologically very significant development” of the social units based in household relationships.<sup>105</sup> Indeed, as shall be discussed, the understanding of gender relations as the fulcrum around which lineages and other social groupings are reproduced has been central to developments in the field of cultural anthropology. Weber, however, omits any consideration of gender relations in his elaboration of patrimonialism. He considers the relations structured by marriage only insofar as they pertain to the household economy. Once he moves from the analysis of the household unit to the patrimonial state, women are significant only in so far as they are assessed as property.

Gender relations in kinship systems became a focus of anthropological work in the 1970's. Claude Lévi-Strauss' *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, published in French

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<sup>104</sup> Weber, “Household, Neighborhood, and Kin Group,” in *Economy and Society*, vol 1, 357.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid 358.

in 1949 and in English in 1969 was an important precursor to work on gender relations.<sup>106</sup>

Lévi-Strauss placed the relations of exchange inherent in marriage practices at the center of the study of kinship. He argued that rules concerning accepted forms of marriage alliance shaped the formation and perpetuation of structures of social relatedness. Furthermore, he likened the mechanisms of marriage alliances to the semiotic function of languages. Lévi-Strauss argued that women are treated as signs, circulated in social alliances as words are exchanged in language. The exchange of women between men, like the circulation of words in speech, is the only means to overcome “the contradiction by which the same woman was seen under two incompatible aspects: on the one hand, as the object of personal desire, thus exciting sexual and proprietorial instincts; and, on the other, as the subject of the desire of others, and seen as such, i.e. as the means of binding others through alliance with them.”<sup>107</sup> The formation or destruction of alliances between men hinges on the ability to negotiate this contradiction. Alliances can be forged through the exchange of women or they can be destroyed through sexual competition over women. The dilemma of whether it is more valuable to possess or to exchange a woman can only be resolved based on the overall terms of the exchange.

In his conclusion, Lévi-Strauss suggested a qualification to his conception of women primarily serving as the means of forming alliances between men that anticipated later feminist critique. He wrote that “a woman could never become a sign and nothing more, since even in a man’s world she is still a person, and since in so far as she is

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<sup>106</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, James Harle Bell, John Richard von Sturmer, and Rodney Needham, trans. Rodney Needham, ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

<sup>107</sup> Lévi-Strauss 496.

defined as a sign she must be recognized as a generator of signs.”<sup>108</sup> Later ethnographic work would show that marriage exchanges were not simply alliances forged by groups of men but frequently alliances in which women took an active or even leading role in arranging.<sup>109</sup> On a more profound theoretical level, later work would argue that the gendered categories upon which the conception of kinship depended were as arbitrary and culturally bound as marriage alliances themselves.<sup>110</sup> In a programmatic essay, Janet Fishburne Collier and Sylvia Junko Yanagisako wrote: “although we do not deny that biological differences exist between men and women (just as they do among men and among women), our analytical strategy is to question whether these differences are the universal basis for the cultural categories ‘male’ and ‘female’.”<sup>111</sup> To rephrase Lévi-Strauss, the category of “woman” is in itself generative of the sign system upon which social structures rest.

From this perspective, Schloen’s model of the patrimonial household as both a social structure and an epistemological framework is deficient. In the first place, on the level of social structure, he does not consider the role of women in forming and perpetuating households. Without women, the formation of lineages and marriage alliances that link men to each other as fathers, sons, and brothers would be impossible.

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Janet Carsten, *After Kinship*, 13.

<sup>110</sup> Janet Fishburne Collier and Sylvia Junko Yanagisako, “Toward a Unified Analysis of Gender and Kinship,” pages 14-52 in *Gender and Kinship: Essays Toward a Unified Analysis*, 1987.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid 15. Thus, as Joan Scott puts it, the use of the term ‘gender’ is a way of expressing the fact that ‘male’ and ‘female’ are social categories “imposed on a sexed body.” See Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” 1056. In the case of Ugarit and other ancient cultures, kinship roles were the primary social categories through which gender identity was articulated .

In the second place, on an epistemological level, he does not recognize that the concept of masculinity upon which paternity rests is a product of relational categories of male and female that are culturally generated.

Nonetheless, Schloen's recognition of the mutual reinforcement of social practice and symbolic meaning offers a basis for overcoming the assumption of pre-social distinctions between male and female, which is implicit in his patrimonial model. Yanagisako and Collier argued for a "three-faceted approach" to the study of gender in social systems: "the explication of cultural meanings, the construction of models specifying the dialectical relationship between practice and ideas in the constitution of social inequalities, and the historical analysis of continuities and changes."<sup>112</sup> Schloen follows the first two of these three approaches in his study of Ugarit. He seeks to explicate the cultural meanings of political terminology drawn from household relationships. He constructs his model in order to specify the dialectical relationship between practices and ideas: the practices of a political system organized on the model of household relationships and the household itself as a legitimating metaphor. The terms on which Schloen articulates his patrimonial household model thus allow for its reconfiguration. Because he makes the lived experience of household relationships the basis for his patrimonial model, the model can be reconfigured if other dimensions of lived experience are considered. Schloen's model is not compromised in itself, but only in the limited range of evidence that he admits and the corresponding lacuna in his theoretical framework caused by the absence of a wider field of evidence.

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid 49.



This lacuna in Schloen's analysis is striking given that Ugarit is the focus of his study. Texts from Ugarit attest to the role that royal women played in negotiations between territorial states and in dynastic struggles within these states, as objects of exchange and as political agents in their own right. As discussed above, Ugarit's position in the Hittite imperial system and its extensive excavation over against the lack of excavation of the Late Bronze Age levels at Karkamiš, the major political center for Hittite rule in Syria, make Ugarit a unique resource for reconstructing the alliances and conflicts that shaped the regional system in which women played a pivotal role. Analysis of gender dynamics in this system adds a new dimension to Schloen's work, which represents the third approach Yanagisako and Collier advocate: the historical analysis of continuities and changes. The purview of Schloen's study of Ugarit is limited to Ugarit's internal structure, independent of its situation within a larger political system and the historical changes and continuities within this system. However, tracing the roles of royal women by necessity requires an expansion of Schloen's purview into the realm of political history. The primary role of royal women in brokering relationships through interdynastic and imperial-vassal marriage alliances means that any evaluation of Ugarit that takes women into account must grapple with the historical contingencies of Ugarit's position in the larger system.

Schloen investigated the patrimonial household as both social fact and symbol. The question these texts present is what the *fact* of relationships between royal women and men might mean for the symbolic system in which they operated. How might Schloen's model change when the "lived experience" of women and of men's relationship

to women is taken seriously? If in official documents men defined themselves and their relationships to other men on the basis of their relationships to women, then these relationships had to be part of the way they understood their social and political system. Texts from Ugarit show that affiliations with royal women were part of means by which men expressed their relationship to each other. An accurate understanding of political affiliations expressed in terms of fatherhood, sonship, and brotherhood requires an understanding of the position of wives, daughters, and sisters. Schloen's vision of the patrimonial system should be expanded to include the agency of royal women. The "House of the Father" was by necessity also the house of wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters without whom the royal family could not reproduce itself, make strategic alliances, or perpetuate its power.

The following case studies will take up these networks of relationship, beginning with the relationship between royal women and their sons. The first case study deals with the Ugaritic letters from kings to their mothers, whom they address as queen and consult with on diplomatic and military matters. The practices of political relationships between royal mothers and sons reflected in these letters are salient for a reconception of the patrimonial model, but even more so are the forms of self-identification in the letters. The king identifies himself both as king and as the son of his mother, the queen. This double identification as king and son of the queen indicates a political reciprocity between royal mothers and sons that is borne out in the second case study. The second case study compares two groups of imperial legal verdicts concerning two sets of royal mothers and their sons. The final case study shifts to an analysis of the function of

women as daughters, wives, and sisters within an imperial and interdynastic political system. This final study examines Hittite legal verdicts and regional accords between the kings of Ugarit and Amurru that pertain to the divorce of a royal woman of Amurru from the king of Ugarit. These three cases studies, individually and collectively, offer a basis through which to reconceive the royal “House of the Father,” not as a system revolving around one powerful man, but as a network of alliances under constant negotiation by royal women and men.

## CHAPTER ONE

### ROYAL MOTHERS AND SONS IN THE UGARITIC LETTERS

The texts that survive from Ugarit offer two distinct perspectives on the world that produced them. Imperial legal verdicts and treaties in Akkadian from the royal palace offer a view of Ugarit as a wealthy city-state under the authority of the Hittite Great Kings and their officials in Syria. However, in addition to these imperial texts in Akkadian, the political *lingua franca* of the time, texts also survive in the local language, Ugaritic. These texts, particularly the letters exchanged between members of the royal family and other elites, offer a view of political life within Ugarit. Thirteen of these letters were written to queens and two letters were written from queens to their subordinates.<sup>113</sup> Among these letters, six are addressed to the queen from her son, the

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<sup>113</sup> This count is based on the letters published to date. In this dissertation, all texts, Ugaritic and Akkadian, are referenced by their excavation numbers (RS). In this footnote, however, the KTU<sup>2</sup> numbers for each Ugaritic letter are also given, referencing their numbering in Manfred Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín, eds. *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places*, KTU: Second, Enlarged Edition, (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995).

The letters to the queen are as follows:

RS 15.008 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.16); RS 15.174 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.21); RS 16.379 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.30); RS 16.402 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.33) in Claude F. A. Schaeffer and Charles Virolleaud, *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, Vol. II: Textes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques des Archives Est, Ouest et Centrales*, Mission de Ras Shamra 7 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale and Klincksieck, 1957) no. 15, 16, 13, and 12.

RS 8.315 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.11); RS 9.479A (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.12); RS 11.872 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.13) in Herdner, *Corpus des Tablettes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques*, no. 50-52.

RS 17.139 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.34) in Claude F. A. Schaeffer and Charles Virolleaud, *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit, Vol. V: Textes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques des Archives Sud, Sud-Ouest et du Petit Palais*, Mission de Ras Shamra 11 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale and Klincksieck, 1965) no.9.

RIH 78/12 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.82) in Pierre Bordreuil and André Caquot, "Les Textes en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques Découvertes en 1978 à Ibn Hani," *Syria* 57 (1980): 343-373.

RS varia 4 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.14) in Pierre Bordreuil, "Quatre Documents en Cunéiformes Alphabétiques Mal Connus ou Inédits," *Semitica* 32 (1982): 5-14.

king (RS 11.872, RS 16.379, RS 15.008, RS 17.139, RIH 78/12, and RS 34.124). While the letters for the most part do not include personal names or other data that might locate them in a particular historical moment, they offer a starting point for an analysis of how royal women functioned within Ugarit.

The most basic fact to which the Ugaritic letters attest is that royal women could remain queen from the reigns of their husbands into the reigns of their sons. The letters offer a glimpse of the relationship between royal women and their sons in action. The letters from kings to their mothers show that royal women not only remained queen in title, but also continued to be involved in the political life of Ugarit, in particular, its relationships with the Hittite imperial powers and with neighboring kingdoms. Most importantly, the letters show that the terms in which a king might identify himself in an official document included being the son of the queen. Male rulers in Late Bronze Age Syria and Anatolia, as in other periods and regions in the ancient Near East, asserted their authority by identifying themselves as the sons and grandsons of kings. The Ugaritic letters raise the question of what it meant for a king to identify himself as the son of a queen.

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RS 20.199 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.68) in Pardee, "Further Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography," 213-214.

RS 34.124 (KTU<sup>2</sup> 2.72) in Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, "Textes Alphabétiques," in *Une Bibliothèque au Sud de la Ville: Lest Textes de la 34e Campagne (1973)*, Ras Shamra-Ougarit 7 (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1991) no. 88. [Hereafter RSO 7] See also Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 3 (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2009), Text 29.

The letters from the queen, RS 94.24006 and RS 96.2039 and an additional letter to the queen from the *sakinu*, RS 94.2479 are published in Bordreuil and Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, Texts 31-32.

This question is central to the project of re-conceptualizing the patrimonial household as a political model. The patrimonial household model presumes that the only relational identity applicable to the king was “father.” In this framework, if a king was considered a son, it would only be as the son of a father whose modality of rule he replicated in his own patrimonial authority. Yet, in these letters, the king positions himself as his mother’s son. This is not simply a function of the fact that the letters were addressed to his mother. As we shall see, a king could address his mother without identifying himself as her son. The reciprocal pairing in particular letters of the phrases “to the queen, my mother” and “from the king, your son” evokes a relational dynamic that inflects the nature of the writer’s position as king. The inventory of household terms available as political signifiers included the king as son and the queen as mother. These letters allow us to investigate what these terms signified for both parties.

The Hittite legal verdicts in Akkadian that situate Ugarit within an interdynastic and imperial sphere will be discussed in the following chapters. This chapter will focus on the six letters from the king to his mother, the queen.<sup>114</sup> These letters, as a group, constitute the primary resource for understanding how the imperial sphere was viewed from within the Ugaritic royal family. These letters likely performed a variety of functions, many of which we can only guess at. What is immediately apparent, however, is that all of the letters between the king and his mother are written within the context of inter-regional political negotiations and military concerns. Four of the six letters are

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<sup>114</sup> While letters from the queen to her son would be critical to this analysis, no such letters survive. One of the letters from the king, RS 17.139, however, does at least refer to a message from the queen to which her son is responding. See the following discussion.

written on the occasion of the king of Ugarit's visits to the Hittite Great King. The fact that these critical moments in the relationship between the king of Ugarit and the Hittite Great King are preserved in letters from the king to his mother calls for more systematic analysis than has yet been given to this corpus, especially in light of the Hittite imperial legal verdicts that concern the relationships between queens and their sons. The point of intersection of the Ugaritic letters and the Hittite imperial verdicts is not simply the fact that they illuminate relationships between royal mothers and sons, but that the evidence for these relationships is found in a diplomatic context.

This chapter will discuss the internal perspective on the imperial sphere conveyed in the Ugaritic letters as well as the relationship between the king and his mother through which this perspective was so frequently mediated. The Ugaritic letters convey an internal perspective in several ways. In the first instance, although the letters make use of epistolary conventions found in Akkadian letters, they were written in the script and language particular to Ugarit. Both in terms of their audience and in their linguistic medium these letters represent a political system from within. Secondly, the political work of the letters is not simply the information they convey but the way in which they deploy epistolary conventions to indicate the relative status of sender and addressee. These forms of self-identification and address represent modes of relationships among members of the royal family.

The language in which the king identifies himself in his letters expresses the political and social expectations between himself and his addressee, as well as the expectations of those who participated in the conveyance of the communication. Every

letter opens with the command known widely in the Akkadian epistolary tradition, that the official transmitting the letter “speak” the message recorded on the tablet. While we cannot know definitively the context in which letters were composed and delivered, the standard use of this imperative conveys a performative or even public dimension of a highly mediated mode of correspondence. The letters can be mined for information about the political system by investigating the way they deploy epistolary conventions and the forms of self-identification and address that frame the message. These aspects of the letters offer insight into how the king understood his relationship to his mother, how he intended the relationship to be perceived, and what his status as the son of a queen meant for his status as king.

The point of departure for this inquiry is how the king expressed his relationship and relative status to his mother. The style of self-presentation in the letters is striking. In most of the letters, the king addresses his mother as one would a social or political superior. When the king reports on his visits as a vassal to show loyalty and deference to the Hittite Great King, he does so with epistolary forms of deference to his mother. The king thus moves from one frame of deference to another in these letters. His reports of obeisance to the Great King are framed by epistolary figures of obeisance to his mother. His position as king of Ugarit is distinguished by his positioning himself as the son of his mother the queen.

The letters show that a royal woman was politically involved enough to receive a report from the Hittite court. Even more, they show that being the son of the queen was fundamental enough to the king’s political status to make such identification the basis of a



report on Ugarit's most critical diplomatic relationship. The deferential language of these letters suggests that the king had something to gain by reporting to the queen just as much as she stood to gain from receiving a report and thus being included in that diplomatic exchange. As we shall see in the chapters that follow, the political reciprocity between royal mothers and sons implicit in the letters is borne out in the Hittite legal verdicts.

The letters are internal documents, written for an audience with a shared frame of reference and body of knowledge. Unlike legal documents, written to stand for all time, these letters do not for the most part mention the names of sender and addressee, nor of the Hittite Great Kings they reference. Yet rather than treating the Ugaritic letters as documents lacking historical data, I will show how they complement the historically situated Hittite legal verdicts. The letters alert us to a political dynamic, whereas the legal verdicts allow us to examine specific examples of this dynamic between historically identifiable actors. The ultimate question of what was at stake for royal sons in their relationships with their mothers cannot be definitely answered by the Ugaritic letters alone. Rather, the letters provoke us to ask such questions of the legal texts. Taken together, these two bodies of texts illuminate how the relationship of royal mothers and sons figured in Ugarit's internal and external political realms.

## **“YOUR SON, THE KING”: PATTERNS OF ROYAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The six letters from the king to his mother the queen—RS 11.872, RS 16.379, RS 15.008, RS 17.139, RIH 78/12, and RS 34.124—are the greatest number of letters sent between consistent pairs of correspondents.<sup>115</sup> This distribution suggests that the line of communication between royal mother and son was an important one within the royal household. Furthermore, this line of communication was operative at critical political moments when the king was away from Ugarit. As noted, four of the six letters deal with the king’s visits to the Hittite sovereign and are ostensibly written from the Hittite court. These letters to his mother the queen are the only surviving texts in which the king reports on these visits. In this first section of the chapter, I will consider these six letters as a group in order to discern the patterns of relationship between royal mothers and sons embodied in their formal epistolary structure. In the following two sections, I will examine the letters in sequence to show how their content and context illuminates the political reciprocity between royal women and their sons.

The letters between the king and his mother the queen, like all of the letters from Ugarit, are primarily configured by epistolary formulae, which often comprise nearly the entirety of the letter. Yet, Robert Hawley has shown that the formulae are far from epistolary boilerplate. Rather, they represent a system that scribes and senders could manipulate based on the goals and context of the letters. In an exhaustive study, Hawley

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<sup>115</sup> The lack of proper names in the letters makes it impossible to determine whether the same royal mother and son were the correspondents in all these letters; however, the salient issue is that the letters reflect correspondence between consistent relational pairs, mother/queen and son/king.

identifies the standard formulae and the social relationships they convey.<sup>116</sup> He shows that the social relations communicated in the epistolary forms provide a source of data for examining the social structure of Ugarit.<sup>117</sup> Hawley presents two letters from the king to his mother as an example of how a scribe and sender might make use of different epistolary forms to express shifts in relationship. I will examine the entire corpus of letters between the king and his mother, the queen, through the lens of Hawley's work on epistolary formulae. I will then push further Hawley's conclusions on the data these letters offer for understanding the social system of Ugarit. Hawley draws incisive points of correlation between the forms and terms of the letters and the patrimonial political system at Ugarit, yet he does not consider how the data before him on kings and their mothers challenge the basis on which patrimonialism has hitherto been conceptualized.

Hawley identifies compositional patterns in five components of Ugaritic letters: the address formulae, the prostration formula, the salutation formula, the divine benediction formula, and the reciprocal well-being formula.<sup>118</sup> In what follows I will bring Hawley's analysis of the first three formulae to bear on to the corpus of the letters from the king to his mother, the queen. The address formula, prostration formula, and salutation formula are the greatest areas of variance in these letters. I will then investigate Hawley's conclusions on the extent to which the kinship terms employed in the letters

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<sup>116</sup> Robert Hawley, *Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography*, Ph.D. dissertation (University of Chicago, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 2003).

<sup>117</sup> Hawley, "Household Metaphors in the Epistolary Traditions of Ugarit," in *Society and Administration in Ancient Ugarit: Papers Read at a Symposium in Leiden, 13-14 December 2007*, Uitgaven van het Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten te Leiden, 114, Wilfred van Soldt, ed. (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2010) 71-83.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid 72-74.

may serve as social data for understanding the world in which the writers and addressees were situated. I will show that the letters provide data not simply for understanding the social world in a general sense, but specifically for understanding how relationships between kings and their mothers shaped the political system in which they were embedded.

The first component of the Ugaritic letters that Hawley identifies is the address formula.<sup>119</sup> The address formula appears in three patterns that communicate three different kinds of relationship between sender and addressee. The first of these three patterns is used when the letter is addressed to a social superior. The letter begins by identifying the addressee, first by name or more commonly by a title, (king, queen) and then by a term reflecting a household or kinship relationship (mother, father, lord, or lady). Then the sender identifies herself or himself, first by name and title, and then by the household or kinship term complementary to the one with which the addressee is identified. Two of the letters to the queen from her son, the king, have these complementary forms.<sup>120</sup>

(1) *l . mlkt* (2) *ʾumy . rgm* (3) *thm . mlk* (4) *bnk* (RS 11.872)  
 (2) <sup>[l]</sup>*l mlkt* . <sup>[u]</sup>*u*<sup>[m]</sup>*[m]*<sup>[y]</sup>*y* (2) <sup>[r]</sup>*r*<sup>[gm]</sup>*gm* . *th*<sup>[m]</sup>*m* (3) *mlk . bn*<sup>[k]</sup>*k* (RS 16.379)

To the queen, my mother, say: message from the king, your son.

<sup>119</sup> Nougayrol first identified the significance of the sequencing of address formulae in the Akkadian letters from Ugarit. He showed that when a letter was addressed to a social superior, the addressee's name (B) was given first and the sender's name (A) is second: "*ana B qibi-ma umma A*." Conversely, when the letter was addressed to an inferior by a superior, the sender's name was given first: "*umma A ana B qibi-ma*" (PRU III: 2-3).

<sup>120</sup> A third letter of this type from the king to his mother survives (RS 34.124), but the initial section of the tablet is badly broken and the address and prostration formulas can only be reconstructed. Other segments of RS 34.124 are discussed below.

In comparison, Hawley offers the address of a letter to the queen by one who uses the term, “my lady” rather than mother.

(1) *l mlkt* (2) *ʾadty* (3) *rgm* (4) *thm tlmyn* (5) *ʿbdk* (RS 9.479 A)  
To the queen, my lady, say: message of Talmiyanu your servant”

To this we may also add the three additional extant letters in which the queen is addressed as “my lady” by a “servant.”

(1) *[l] . mlkt . ʾadty . rgm* (2) *thm . skn . ʿbdk* (RS 94.2479)  
To the queen, my lady, say: message of the governor, your servant.

(1) *[l] . mlkt . ʾadty* (2) *rgm* (3) *[t]hm . ʾurġttb . ʿbdk* (RS 20.199)  
To the queen, my lady, say: message of Urġitēṭub, your servant.

(1) *[l . mlkt . ʾa]dty* (2) *[rgm th]m . ʾirrtrm . ʿbdk* (RS 16.402)  
To the queen, my lady, say: message of ʾIriṭarruma, your servant.

In both sets of letters, “queen” is the title of the addressee and “mother” and “lady” are the relational terms paired respectively with “son” and “servant.” Hawley notes that the two forms of identification perform different functions. The first, the name or title, is applicable only to that particular addressee. The second term, the relational or kinship term, communicates the nature of the relationship between sender and addressee as the sender sought to assert it. Hawley argues that “the ancient letter writer could conceivably call anyone ‘my brother’ or ‘my sister,’ presuming it was in his or her interest to do so, but could not call just anyone ‘Talmiyanu’ or ‘Queen.’”<sup>121</sup> When read against this epistolary convention, the terms “mother” and “son” were not simply descriptions of a biological

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<sup>121</sup> Hawley, “Household Metaphors in the Epistolary Traditions of Ugarit,” 76.

relationship, but rather terms that established relative status and communicated the deference of a subordinate to a superior. The pairing of mother and son in this way was deliberate. In other letters, the king did not begin by identifying his mother as such or by using the term “mother” in this deferential address formula. By making use of this deferential formula and identifying himself both as king and as son to the queen, the king is framing their relationship along particular lines for a distinct social or political end. I shall return to this point as my analysis of the epistolary patterns continues.

The second address pattern Hawley identifies occurs when the sender is an equal of the addressee. In this case, the sender’s name appears first and then the addressee’s name. The kinship term that follows the addressee’s name is “brother” or “sister.” None of the king’s letters to the queen takes this form. The third address pattern expresses the superior status of the sender over against the addressee. In this case, the sender is identified first and typically no relational terms are used. Hawley offers examples of both Ugaritic and Akkadian letters in which this is the case (RS 29.095, RS 20.023.1, RS 20.013.1). The letter in which the queen addresses a subordinate, her official ʾUrtenu offers an example of the form.

(1) *thm . mlkt* (2) *l ʾurtn rgm* (RS 94. 24006)  
 Message of the queen to ʾUrtenu, say: . .

This letter illustrates all the features that Hawley identifies for this final formula. The queen, the sender, is listed first and her addressee ʾUrtenu follows. The queen does not identify herself in terms of a relationship with ʾUrtenu, only by her title. ʾUrtenu is identified likewise only by his name. The message is marked clearly as being from a

superior to a subordinate. One letter from the king to his mother exhibits critical features of this formula.

(1) *thm . mlk* (2) *l . tryl . ʾumy . rgm* (RS 17.139)  
Message of the king to T̄ariyelli,<sup>122</sup> my mother, say: . .

The address formula follows the superior/subordinate pattern in which the sender listing his name or title first and then the addressee. The queen is addressed only by her name, not by her title. However, unlike the formulae standard for this pattern, her position as “mother” is given. What is important to note, however, is that while the king identifies her as his mother, he does not identify himself as her son. This shift in the way the king identifies himself continues in the letter’s subsequent components, the prostration formula and the salutation pattern, as shall be discussed below. However, one may say at the outset that this variation in forms of address indicates that the use of particular forms was intentional.

The prostration formula and the salutation pattern constitute the major expressions of the nature of the relationship set up in the patterns of epistolary address. The prostration formula is a standard feature of all letters in which a superior is addressed by a subordinate. It is omitted in all other cases. The salutation pattern, likewise, distinguishes the relationship of sender to addressee. When a superior is addressed, the salutation repeats the relational or kinship term used in the address formula. When a

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<sup>122</sup> As these letters contain the rare appearance of the personal name of a queen in a Ugaritic text, the Ugaritic spelling of her name, T̄ariyelli, is used in the translations of the letters, as opposed to the Akkadian spelling Šarelli which is used in the main text of the dissertation. The Akkadian spelling Šarelli is employed in the main text for the sake of conformity with the fact that Akkadian texts are the sources for the names of all the other royal women discussed in the dissertation.

subordinate is addressed, only the second person pronoun is used. I will consider the prostration formula first and then the salutation formula.

The two letters in which the king addresses his mother as “the queen, my mother” and identifies himself as “the king, your son” include the prostration formula. The formulae are identical in each letter.

(1) *l . mlkt* (2) *ʿumy . rgm* (3) *thm . mlk* (4) *bnk*  
(5) *l . pʿn . ʿumy* (6) *qlt* (RS 11.872)

(1) <sup>[l]</sup> *mlkt* . <sup>[u]</sup>*[m]* <sup>[y]</sup> (2) <sup>[r]</sup>*gm* . *th* <sup>[m]</sup> (3) *mlk* . *bn* <sup>[k]</sup>  
(4) <sup>[l]</sup> . *pʿn* . <sup>[u]</sup>*m* <sup>[y]</sup> (5) *qlt* (RS 16.379)

To the queen, my mother, say: message from the king, your son.  
At my mother’s feet I fall.

This formula uses the idiom of “falling at the feet” of the addressee, so that the written word expresses a physical action which may have been enacted were the sender truly at the addressee. Such prostration formulae frequently reiterate the household metaphor by which the addressee was identified, as in this letter: “*l . pʿn . ʿumy . qlt*; at my mother’s feet I fall.” Alongside these two letters from the king, we may consider the letters to the queen from officials and other subordinates who do not use the kinship terms “mother” and “son,” but rather “lady” and “servant” to identify their relationship to the queen. These letters exemplify the full range of the prostration formula, from its most abbreviated to its most complete expression.

(1) <sup>[l]</sup> *[.] mlkt* . *ʿadty . rgm* (2) *thm . skn . ʿbdk*  
(3) <sup>[l]</sup> *[.] pʿn . ʿadty . qlt* (RS 94.2479)

To the queen, my lady, say: message of the governor, your servant. At the feet of my lady I fall.

(1) *[l . mlkt . ʿa]dty* (2) *[rgm th]m . ʿirrtrm . ʿbdk*



(3) [l . p<sup>ʿ</sup>n . ʾa]dty . mrḥqm (4) [qlt] (RS 16.402)

To the queen, my lady, say: message of ʾIriṛitarruma, your servant. At the feet of my lady from afar I fall down.

(1) [l] . mlkt . ʾadty (2) rgm (3) [t]ḥm . ʾurḡttb . ʿbdk

(4) l . p<sup>ʿ</sup>n . ʾadty (5) mrḥqtm (6) šb<sup>ʿ</sup>d . w . šb<sup>ʿ</sup>d (7) qlt (RS 20.199)

To the queen, my lady, say: message of Urḡiteṭub, your servant. At the feet of my lady from afar I fall down seven times and seven times.

The idiom of falling down at the feet of the addressee is extended first by positioning the letter's sender as prostrating himself at a distance and then by extending the act of prostration by the idiom "seven times and seven times." In light of these examples, the prostration formula used by the king in the three letters to his mother is of the abbreviated type. Nonetheless, the use of the prostration formula even in abbreviated form locates the letters of the king to his mother the queen within a particular genre of correspondence, one in which a subordinate negotiates a relationship with a superior. The use of the prostration formula provides further evidence that the mother/son relationship posited in the address of the king's letters to his mother expressed a relationship beyond that of a biologically based kinship between mother and son. To be the "king, your son" in this context was to inhabit a formal social or political position that carried with it expectations of behavior and epistolary expression.

The intentional or even strategic nature of the use of the honorific address pattern and the prostration formula in these letters of the king to his mother is heightened when considered in light of the absence of the prostration formula in letters RS 17.139 and RS 15.008. These two letters from the king to his mother make use of the address pattern usually reserved for superiors addressing subordinates. The sender, identified as "king" or by his name, is listed first and then the queen is listed, not by her title as queen but by

her name. The prostration formula is completely omitted and the letter continues with the abbreviated salutation pattern reserved for subordinates.

(1) *tḥm . mlk* (2) *l . tryl . ʿumy . rgm* (3) *yšlm . lk* (RS 17.139)

Message of the king to T̄ariyelli, my mother, say: may it be well with you.

(1) *tḥm . tlmyn* (2) *l . tryl . ʿumy* (3) *rgm* (4) *yšlm . lk* (RS 15.008)

Message of Talmiyānu to T̄ariyelli, my mother, say: may it be well with you.

The relational term “mother” is used here, but the complementary term “son” is absent.

By contrast, the letters discussed above, which include the subordinate to superior address pattern and the prostration formula, make use of the full form of the salutation pattern in which the term “mother” is repeated.

(1) *l . mlkt* (2) *ʿumy . rgm* (3) *tḥm . mlk* (4) *bnk*  
(5) *l . pʿn . ʿumy* (6) *qlt . l . ʿumy* (7) *yšlm* (RS 11.872)

(1) <sup>[l]</sup> *mlkt* . <sup>[u]</sup> *[m]* <sup>[y]</sup> (2) <sup>[r]</sup> *gm* . *tḥ* <sup>[m]</sup> (3) *mlk* . *bn* <sup>[k]</sup>  
(4) <sup>[l]</sup> . *pʿn* . <sup>[u]</sup> *m* <sup>[y]</sup> (5) *qlt* . *ly* . *ʿumy* (6) *yšlm* (RS 16.379)

To the queen, my mother, say: message from the king, your son.

At my mother’s feet I fall. With my mother may it be well.

If we consider only that the term “my mother” is used in all these letters, their opposing use of the epistolary formulae appears perplexing. However, the crucial difference between these two sets of letters is not whether the term “my mother” is used but whether the king identifies himself as her son. When the king identifies himself as the son of his mother, using the complementary relational terms established in the address, “to the queen, my mother, say: message from the king, your son,” prostration follows, as does the repeated use of the term “mother” in the salutation. However, when the king does not use the complementary framework of mother and son, no such forms of deference are

used. The indicative element of these letters then is not so much their identification of the queen's position as mother but the king's position as son.

So we return to the central question: what did it mean for a king to identify himself as the son of his mother? What factors would cause a king to identify himself as his mother's son in one context, showing epistolary deference, but not in another? Hawley argues that the varying use of these formulae in the king's correspondence represents one instance of the way in which the people of Ugarit manipulated epistolary formula to their own purposes. Hawley grants that the formulae discussed above could be seen as simply Ugaritic forms of standard Akkadian epistolary formulae. However, Hawley's extensive study of the entire corpus of Ugaritic letters shows that the use of epistolary formulae in Ugaritic letters varies to an extent that is unprecedented in Akkadian letters.<sup>123</sup> Hawley identifies the kinship and household terms, as being the "triggers" of this variation.<sup>124</sup> He argues that writers were able to nuance the limited inventory of social relationships expressed in kinship and household terms, such as mother/son and lady/servant, by varying their use of epistolary formulae.

With regard to the varying formulae found in letters from the king to his mother, Hawley makes an incisive, even humorous, observation.

What these and similar examples of apparent formal inconsistencies demonstrate is NOT- in my opinion- that the king was not sure what his relationship with his mother was, but rather they show how the writer (or the writer's scribe) could explicitly employ one set of metaphors, but use formulaic patterns typically associated with another set of metaphors. They also illustrate how one could change from one pattern to another according to

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<sup>123</sup> Hawley, "Household Metaphors in the Epistolary Traditions of Ugarit," 71-72, 74.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid 74.

the needs of the moment. This kind of formal variation was surely not arbitrary. It must have served a pragmatic, and probably self-serving political or at least social end.<sup>125</sup>

Hawley notes that terms of kinship or household relationship are used predominately in letters in which a subordinate addresses a superior and rarely when a superior addresses a subordinate. We have seen that when the king uses the complimentary terms of identification, “my mother/your son,” he also uses the prostration formula and deferential salutation pattern. When the king does not identify himself as his mother’s son, he does not use the deferential forms. Hawley suggests that the reason subordinates may have chosen to use kinship or household terminology is that such terminology may have evoked the social obligations upon which subordinates based their requests.<sup>126</sup> Thus, the language of humility and deference was strategic. As we shall see, Hawley’s pragmatic interpretation of the use of epistolary conventions is of great import in interpreting the king’s letters to his mother.

Hawley’s analysis is remarkable in that he includes female terms in the inventory of male patrimonial household terms discussed by Schloen. Hawley does not draw attention to this intervention; indeed, he appears simply to include these female terms as a matter of course because they are part of the data that the letters offer. Yet, by considering the relationship between the king and his mother within the context of Schloen’s patrimonial household model, Hawley has made a significant, if unarticulated, theoretical move. Hawley cites at length a passage from Schloen’s *House of the Father as*

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid 79.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid 81.

*Fact and Symbol* in which Schloen argues that, “relationships patterned on the household model served to integrate society and to legitimate the exercise of power.”<sup>127</sup> Whereas Schloen considers only the terms “father,” “son,” “brother,” “master,” and “servant,” the Ugaritic letters show that a king’s identity as the son of a queen continued to be a salient one even after he began to exercise power along the lines of a model in which he would figure as “father.” We have asked what it meant for a king to identify himself as the son of queen. Hawley’s pragmatic approach to the use of epistolary conventions suggests that the king did so because this self-identification was politically advantageous. To be the son of a queen added a particular kind of legitimation to a king’s exercise of power.

#### **“MY MOTHER, THE QUEEN”: ROYAL MOTHERS AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS**

The question these letters present is not merely what it meant a king to identify himself as the son of his mother, but what the king stood to gain by doing so. What political capital or other resources might a royal mother have to bestow on her son to motivate such deference? The answer to this central question may be found by investigating more closely the basic phenomena of a queen who retains her political position from the reign of her husband into the reign of her son. The address “my mother, the queen” encodes a political history. The combination of these terms does not simply indicate two kinds of status, royal and familial. These terms encode a temporal trajectory

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<sup>127</sup> Schloen, *The House of the Father*, 172, cited in Hawley, “Household Metaphors in the Epistolary Traditions of Ugarit,” 77.

of two political offices in which the woman's position precedes that of the current king. Whatever the nature of the political office to which the term "queen" referred, the mother of the king by definition had held this position before her son was born. Her role as queen extended from the reign of one male ruler into the next. When a son became king after his father, he inherited a political architecture comprised of the human players with whom he had to reckon and the pre-existing obligations created by the treaties and alliances that structured the interregional system. A queen who remained in office from the reign of her husband to her son was a woman who had established her political tenure in this system and had the acumen to maintain it.

The Hittite Great King mentioned in the letters from the king to his mother was most likely a political figure with whom his mother had been in relationship before her son became king. If the Great King was her son's contemporary then the situation is even more to the point. The queen would have brought to bear the political experience of the reign of the prior king in Ugarit as well as the prior Great King of Hatti. From this perspective, the fact that the queen is the person to whom her son, the new king, addresses reports of his diplomatic audiences with the Great King makes sense. Whether or not she had a formal diplomatic role within the imperial-vassal alliance, at the very least a woman who had maintained political tenure through two periods of rule in Ugarit would have been an advantageous person with whom to confer. While a king passed on to his son and successor the authority to rule a polity, a surviving queen was in a position to provide on-going political support and historical perspective in negotiating what her son had inherited. The content of the letters bears this out.

While the corpus of letters addressed to the queen by her son the king varies in regard to the way the son represents himself in relationship to his mother, all the letters share a similar focus: Ugarit's political position with regard to the Hittite rulers and neighboring Syrian kingdoms. This consistency suggests several aspects of the nature of a surviving queen's position in her son's regime. Hawley's assumption in his presentation of the letters is that they were sent by the same king to the same queen and that the shifts in the way the king identified himself in relationship to his mother represent varying strategies in response to the needs of the occasion. However, the variations might also be due to the fact that the letters were written by other kings to other mothers whose relationships differed. In either case, the commonality of the content of the letters suggests that, regardless of differences in individual strategies or fluctuations in relationships over time, diplomatic, interregional matters remained within the queen's purview.

The majority of the letters deal with the Hittites, the most critical of the relationships in which Ugarit was engaged. Over the course of the reigns of all the Ugaritic kings and royal women for whom textual evidence survives, Ugarit was a vassal of Hatti. Niqmaddu II, king of Ugarit, capitulated to Šuppiluliuma I and signed a vassal treaty with him in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century, establishing an arrangement that endured until the end of the Hittite empire and the destruction of Ugarit, from c.1350-1190/85 BCE. Nonetheless, the significant wealth Ugarit possessed as hub of commercial activity on the Syrian coast, positioned between the spheres of Egyptian and Hittite dominance, meant

that the kings of Ugarit possessed a degree of leverage in regard to their duties and obligations to the Hittite rulers.

Letters RS 11.872, RS 16.379, RS 15.008, and RS 17.139 report on the king's audience with the Hittite Great King. The first two we will consider, RS 11.872 and RS 16.379, discuss tribute given to the Hittite rulers. As we have seen, these two letters are structured by the highest register of honorific address by the king to his mother. We will consider the epistolary framework alongside the content of the letters. The letter RS 16.379 draws a connection between the presentation of tribute and military action.

- (1) <sup>l</sup>mlkt . <sup>u</sup>[m]<sup>y</sup> (2) <sup>r</sup>gm . th<sup>m</sup> [ ] (3) mlk . bn<sup>k</sup> [ ]  
 (4) <sup>l</sup> . p<sup>n</sup> . <sup>u</sup>m<sup>y</sup> (5) qlt <sup>l</sup> . <sup>y</sup> . <sup>u</sup>[m]<sup>y</sup> (6) yšlm . <sup>i</sup>l[m]  
 (7) tḡ<sup>r</sup>k . tš[l] <sup>m</sup>k (8) <sup>h</sup>l<sup>n</sup>y . mn<sup>y</sup> [ . š]lm  
 (9) w . tm<sup>n</sup> . <sup>m</sup> [ . <sup>u</sup>]my (10) mnm . š<sup>l</sup>[m] (11) w . rgm [ . ttb . ] <sup>l</sup>y  
 (12) hlny . mn (13) mlk . b . ty ndr (14) <sup>i</sup>tt . w . ht (15) [-]sny . <sup>u</sup>drh  
 (16) w . hm . ht . (17) <sup>l</sup> . w . l<sup>i</sup>kt (18) <sup>m</sup>k . w . hm  
 (19) l . <sup>l</sup> . w . l<sup>a</sup>km (20) <sup>i</sup>l<sup>a</sup>k . w . <sup>a</sup>t (21) <sup>u</sup>my . <sup>a</sup>l . tdh<sup>l</sup>  
 (22) w . <sup>a</sup>p . mhkm (23) b . lbk . <sup>a</sup>l . (24) tšt

- (1) To the queen, my mo[ther], (2) say: message of (3) the king, your son.  
 (4) At the feet of my mother (5) I fall. With my mother, (6) May it be well. May the Gods (7) protect you and keep you well. (8) Here with me it is well.  
 (9) There with my mother, (10) whatever is well, (11) send word back to me.  
 (12-15) Here they have vowed an offering to the king as tribute<sup>128</sup> and now . . .<sup>129</sup>

<sup>128</sup> The phrase “b . ty ndr <sup>i</sup>tt,” found here and in RS 11.872: 14-15 is disputed. Pardee understands the phrase as “bi tayyi nadarū <sup>i</sup>ttata,” which he renders “from the tribute they have vowed a gift.” See Dennis Pardee, “Ugaritic Letters,” *Context of Scripture: Archival Documents from the Biblical World* 3 (Boston: Brill, 2003), 92 and Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, 237-238. Likewise, with a slight variation in case vowel, John Huenergard reads the phrase as “bi tayyi nadarū <sup>i</sup>ttātu,” “an offering was vowed as tribute.” See Huehnergard, *An Introduction to Ugaritic* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2012), 105-6 and 193-4. My reading of RS 11.872 and RS 16.379 follows Pardee and Huehnergard. I understand these letters to be concerned with tribute.

Other scholars, however, have argued for alternate readings of the phrase. Among these, Cunchillos understands <sup>i</sup>tt as a first person singular inflection of the particle of existence <sup>i</sup>t, vocalized <sup>i</sup>tātu, meaning “I am,” on analogy with Hebrew yeš. See Jesús-Luis Cunchillos, “Mes Affaires Sont Terminé! Traduction et Commentaire de KTU 2.13,” *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici sul Vicino Oriente Antico* 5 (1988): 47 with references and Cunchillos, “Correspondence,” *Textes Ougaritiques*, Vol. 2: *Textes Religieux, Rituels*,



(16) Now if the Hittite (17) comes up, I will a message, (18) to you and if (19) they do not go up, I will certainly send one. (20) Now you, (21) my mother, do not be afraid (22-24) and do not be distressed.  
(RS 16.379)

The root *ʿl*, (*ʿalâ*), “go up” typically refers to a military advance. While the particularities of the situation to which the letter refers cannot be determined, such whom the Hittites might “go up” against and why, for our purposes it is enough to note that the letter to the queen from her son appears to deal with the fundamental aspects of Hittite power: military might and the acquisition of wealth through extracting tribute.<sup>130</sup>

Several elements of the relationship between the king and his mother are expressed in this letter. The main section of the letter opens with the standard epistolary formula in which the positive condition of the sender is stated alongside a request for the addressee to send back a message reporting the same: “*ʿhʿlny . ʿmʿyʿl [ . š ]lm (9) w . tmʿnʿl . ʿmʿl [ . ʿu]my (10) mnm. šʿlʿl[m] (11) w . rgm [ . ttb . ] ʿlʿy*; Here with me it is well. There with (addressee), whatever is well, send word back to me” (RS 16.379: 8-11). This

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*Correspondence*, Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient 14 (Paris: Cerf, 1989) 289, n.9. However, as Pardee points out, the evidence that this particle was inflected in Ugaritic is scant (Pardee, “Ugaritic Letters,” 92 n.28).

Cunchillos then construes *tyndr* as a place name, producing the reading “A Tyndr je me trouve auprès de la Reine”(Cunchillos, “Mes Affaires Sont Terminé!,” 46). Cunchillos argues that the fact there is no word divider between *ty* and *ndr* and that elsewhere the scribe made use of word dividers “quand il le fallait” proves that *tyndr* is a single word. He speculates that *tyndr* is a Hurrian place name combining either a determinative for river (*ty* for *šiye*) and *ndr* as the name of a mountain, or the noun “waters” (*šiye*) with the article *ni* followed by a divine name *Daru* (Ibid 47). However, construing *tyndr* as a place name in RS 11.872 and RS 16.379 requires that this location be one in which the Hittite Great King and Queen received their vassals and such a location is unattested in any Hittite source.

<sup>129</sup> Pardee reconstructs the broken line *[-]sny . ʿuʿdrhi* as *[ya]sanniyu ʿuḏḏarahu*, “[h]e [as a result has agreed to] augment his ‘vow’,” taking *[ya]sanniyu* as a verb from the root *sny*, “to increase,” and *ʿuḏḏarahu* as a noun which retains the */d/* found the proto-Ugaritic root *\*ndr*, “to vow.” See Pardee, “Ugaritic Letters,” 92 n.31).

<sup>130</sup> Even if we were to accept the argument that “*ty*” does not refer to tribute, it would be difficult to imagine the king of Ugarit appearing before the Hittite Great King without offering tribute, much less incurring the favor of the Great King without it.

statement is standard for letters in this honorific epistolary register. However, this customary expression of the speaker's condition and his request for news from the addressee is inflected by the closing statement in which the king promises further correspondence concerning the actions of the Hittites. The nature of the correspondence promised at the close of the letter sheds light on what the standard epistolary formula at the opening of the letter might have connoted in this particular situation. In the context in which the letter is sent, for the queen to send back word of her condition would be to send back her response to her son's assurances that the situation with the Hittites is in hand. His promise to keep her alerted as to the actions of the Hittites and the implication that not receiving this information would distress her suggests that this letter is one among several that could be expected to pass between the queen and her son with regard to events in Hatti.

The content of the other letters bears this out. Like RS 16.379, the letter RS 11.872 also deals with tribute to the Hittites, in almost exactly the same phrasing; only rather than tribute given to the Hittite Great King, this letter deals with tribute directed toward the Hittite queen.

(1) *l . mlkt* (2) *ʾumy . rgm* (3) *tḥm . mlk* (4) *bnk*  
 (5) *l . pʿn . ʾumy* (6) *qlt . l . ʾumy* (7) *yšlm . ʾilm* (8) *tḡrk . tšlmk* (9) *hlly . ʿmny* (10)  
*kl . šlm* (11) *tḥny . ʿm . ʾumy*

[lower edge] (12) *mnm . šlm* (13) *w . rgm . tṭb . ly* (14) *bm . ty ndr* (15) *ʾitt . ʿmn .*  
*mlk<sup>t</sup>* (16) *w . rgmy . l [?]* (17) *lq(h)t . w . pn* (18) *mlk . nr bn*

(1) To the queen, (2) my mo[ther], say: (3) message of the king, (4) your son.  
 (5) At the feet of my mother (6) I fall. With my mother (7) may it be well. May  
 the gods (8) protect you and keep you well. (9) Here with me (10) all is well.  
 (11) There with my mother, (12) whatever is well, (13) send word back to me.

(14) As tribute they have vowed (15) an offering to the queen. (16) My words she did indeed (17) accept<sup>131</sup> and the face of (18) the king shone upon us. (RS 11.872)

The Hittite Great King is indicated here by the customary metaphor of radiance, “the face of the king shone upon us”(17-18), found also in the prologue of Hittite legal verdicts in which the Great King is referred to as “my Sun,” <sup>d</sup>UTU-*ši* (RS 17.035:1; RS 17.159: 1)<sup>132</sup> and in another Ugaritic letter, in which the Hittite Great King is also called “the Sun,” *špš* and is said to shine upon the king of Ugarit, “*wpn . špš . nr / by*” (RS 15.008: 8, 9-10). The use of this imagery in a text written in Ugaritic and addressed by one member of the royal household to another indicates that although the letters represent an internal perspective, that perspective participates in the ritualized language of imperial rule. These letters are not private correspondence; they are official documents implicated in the power structure upon which they report. They fulfill simultaneously the protocols of two political spheres: the royal context of Ugarit in which the king literally falls at the feet of his mother, the queen, and the imperial context in which he likens the majesty of Hittite king to the sun.

The new figure introduced by this letter is the Hittite queen. The language which describes tribute given to the Hittite queen and tribute given to the Hittite king is almost identical; only the word order differs: *‘mn . mlk . b . ty ndr . ʾitt*, “to the king as tribute they have vowed an offering” (RS 16.379:12-14) and *bm . ty ndr . ʾitt . ‘mn . mlk<sup>[t]</sup>*, “as

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<sup>131</sup> This translation and the restoration of *h* in *l{h}qt* follows Pardee. See Pardee, “Further Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography,” 224 and “Ugaritic Letters,” 92 n.29. For alternate readings see Cunchillos, “Mes Affaires Sont Terminé!,” 48, with references.

<sup>132</sup> RS 17.035 (PRU IV: 123). RS 17.159 (PRU IV: 126-127).

tribute they have vowed an offering to the queen”(RS 11.872: 14-15).<sup>133</sup> This parallel structure indicates that giving tribute to the Hittite queen was as regular and expected an act as giving tribute to the king. Indeed, from the time of the vassal treaty which initiated Hittite rule over Ugarit, established by the Hittite Great King Šuppiluliuma I with Niqmaddu II, offering tribute to the queen of Hatti was stipulated as an obligation of the vassal (RS 17.227, RS 17.330-17.347-17.446).<sup>134</sup> The letter RS 11.872, like RS 16.370 discussed above, thus performs a double act of deference in parallel political spheres. In the first instance, the opening epistolary formulae encode obeisance by the king of Ugarit to his mother, the queen; in the second, the letter reports the king of Ugarit’s obeisance to the Hittite sovereigns. In RS 11.872, both acts of obeisance are offered to royal women and both forms of obeisance involve language. The letter is a form of tribute to the queen of Ugarit both in its epistolary metaphor of falling at her feet and in the act of communication that the letter constitutes. Similarly, when the king reports on the approval his tribute receives, he uses the expression, “my words she did indeed accept; *w . rgmy . l [?] lq(h)t*”(RS 11.872: 16-17).

A further parallel may be drawn between the king’s act of reporting to his mother and the episode within the Hittite court that he reports. In each case, political reciprocity

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<sup>133</sup> Again, the interpretation of *bm . ty ndr ʾitt* is disputed; however, for the reasons given in the notes above, I consider the giving of tribute to be the most reasonable interpretation for the context.

<sup>134</sup> PRU IV: 40-44. Wilfred van Soldt suggested and Pardee’s collations confirmed that RS 17.330, RS 17.347 and RS 17.446 were fragments of a copy of the treaty. See Sylvie Lackenbacher, *Textes Akkadiens d’Ugarit: Textes Provenant Des Vingt-Cinq Premières Campagnes*, Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient, 20 (Paris: Cerf, 2002) 73 n180 and Dennis Pardee, “Three Tablet Joins,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43 (1984): 245.

In the chapter that follows, we will see that queens in Ugarit also accumulated wealth through receiving official gifts (RS 17.396, PRU IV: 127-8).

exists between a royal woman and a royal man. In the Hittite context, the success the king of Ugarit achieves in pleasing the Hittite queen results in favor from the Hittite king. The two are paired in the letter's conclusion: "my words she did indeed accept and the face of the king shone upon us; *w . rgmy . l [?] lq(h)t . w . pn* (18) *mlk . nr bn*"(RS 11.872: 16-18). This pairing of the Hittite Great King and queen echoes the pairing between the Ugaritic king and his mother, the queen, which frames the letter. The mutuality of honoring the Hittite queen and thereby the Great King raises the question of what might be connoted in the epistolary obeisance to the queen of Ugarit that frames the letter. In elevating his mother to a political figure before whom even he, a king, must fall, is the king of Ugarit not in some sense elevating himself? In this formulation, he is not simply the king of Ugarit but the son of the queen whose position demands respect, just as the Hittite queen is owed tribute and pleasing words.

The next two letters which concern relations with the Hittites, RS 17.139 and RS 15.008, diverge from the pattern of reciprocal identification between the king as son and the queen as mother found in RS 11.872 and RS 16.379. Rather than using epistolary formulas for honoring an addressee—the pairing of the relational terms mother and son, the depiction of him falling at her feet, and the repetition of the relational term in the salutation—these letters use formulae more common to letters from superiors to subordinates. The letters open with the formula *tḥm* X, "message of (the sender)." In RS 17.139, the sender identifies himself as king, and in RS 15.008 he identifies himself by his name. Neither letter identifies the addressee as queen, only as *tryl umy*, "my mother, Tarriyelli"(RS 17.139:2 and RS 15.008:2). Furthermore, the salutation formula does not

refer to the addressee as mother or queen. Instead, as common for a letter from a superior to a subordinate, only the pronominal suffix is used: “may it be well with you; *yšlm lk*”(RS 17.139:3 and RS 15.008:4).

The name by which these letters identify the addressee is a well-attested queen, Šarelli, who was active during the last period of the kingdom Ugarit's existence, before its destruction in 1190/85 BCE.<sup>135</sup> These and other texts make it clear that she remained queen from her husband's reign through the reign of her son.<sup>136</sup> She has been associated with many of the late texts addressed to an unnamed queen of Ugarit, including a letter in Akkadian from the Hittite viceroy, the king of Karkamiš, that indicates the wide scope of the queen's governance in Ugarit and diplomatic role within the region.<sup>137</sup> Given Šarelli's apparent status as a queen who maintained tenure and political power over the course of the reigns of at least two kings, the fact that these letters do not address her as queen and use non-honorific formulae is perplexing. Furthermore, their subject matter is the same as the letters discussed above, the king's visit to the Hittite sovereign.

In order to understand these letters, we must look more carefully at both their

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<sup>135</sup> Three Akkadian land transaction texts from the central archive of the royal palace identify her by name: RS 17.102, RS 17.086, and RS 17.325 in *Ugaritica V*, 160 and 262-264. As noted above, for the sake of consistency with the Akkadian sources for the names of the other royal women, this queen's name is written with the Akkadian spelling, Šarelli, in the main text of the dissertation. The Ugaritic spelling, Ṭarriyelli, is reserved for direct citations from the Ugaritic letters.

<sup>136</sup> One text suggests that she may have been alive at her grandson Niqmaddu III's coronation. Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, “Le rituel funéraire ougaritique RS 34.126,” *Syria* 59 (1982): 128 and Wilfred H. van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar*, (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991) 15-18, n. 116.

<sup>137</sup> RS 34.145 (RSO 7, no. 9). In this letter, the king of Karkamiš responds to the queen's concerns about a variety of issues, ranging from restrictions on the distance Ugarit's ships may sail along the coast to the punishment of criminals. See Singer, “A Political History of Ugarit,” 99.

manipulation of the epistolary formulae and the events they report on. While the opening formulae give the names of sender and addressee in the form of superior to subordinate, other aspects of epistolary strategy complicate this interpretation, in particular the divine benediction. As Hawley has shown, the divine benediction formula occurs most often when the sender expresses a relationship to the addressee through a kinship term.<sup>138</sup> The formula is not used in letters of a superior addressing a subordinate. In these letters, even though the queen is addressed by her name, not her title, and the pairing of “to my mother, the queen” and “from the king, your son” does not appear in the opening of the letter, the term mother is still used. These letters thus combine several somewhat contradictory epistolary forms. The question becomes what, if any, significance can we draw from the combination of these forms.

(1) *tḥm . mlk* (2) *l . tryl . ʿumy . rgm* (3) *yšlm . lk . ʿilm* (4) *tḡrk . tšlmk*  
 (5) *lḥt . šlm . k . Pikt* (6) *umy . ʿmy . ht . ʿmny* (7) *kll . šlm . tmny*  
 (8) *ʿm . ʿumy . mnm . šlm* (9) *w . rgm . ttb . ly* (RS 17.139)

(1) Message of the king (2) to Tarriyelli, my mother, say: (3) may it be well with you. May the gods (4) guard you and keep you well. (5-7) Regarding the fact that my mother has sent a message regarding my welfare, (here) with me everything is well. There (8) with my mother, whatever is well, (9) send word back to me.

(1) *tḥm . tlmyn* (2) *l . tryl . ʿumy* (3) *rgm* (4) *yšlm . lk . ʿily* (5) *ʿugrt . tḡrk*  
 (6) *tšlmk . . . .* (16) *w . mnm* (17) *šlm . ʿm* (18) *ʿumy .* (19) *ʿmy . ttb* (20) *rgm*  
 (RS 15.008)

(1) Message of Talmiyānu (2) to Tarriyelli, my mother, (3) say: may it be well with you. May the gods of (5) Ugarit guard you (6) and keep you well. . . .  
 (16) whatever (17) is well with (18) my mother, (19-20) send word back to me.

<sup>138</sup> Hawley, “Household Metaphors in the Epistolary Traditions of Ugarit,” 73

As we can see, these letters, like RS 16.379 and RS 11.872, use the divine benediction formula. Furthermore, the letter RS 17.139, in its opening section, makes use of the formulaic request for news of the well-being of the addressee found in RS 16.379 and RS 11.872. The letter RS 15.008 uses this formula to request word as to his mother's well-being in its closing. The salient difference is that the sender of RS 17.139 and RS 15.008 uses neither the honorific reciprocal formula "to the queen, my mother, say: a message from the king, your son," nor the prostration formula, which are found in RS 16.379 and RS 11.872.

What do these omissions indicate? What purpose is served by the king not identifying himself as a son or his mother as queen? Hawley suggested that these variations likely represented strategies whereby the sender extended the range of what could be communicated through the standard inventory of kinship terms. Hawley suggested that the king might have had something to gain from his mother when making use of the highly honorific formulae.<sup>139</sup> In my discussion of RS 16.379 and RS 11.872, I suggested that part of what the king may have had to gain in honoring his mother might have been his own elevation, by identifying himself as the son of a queen whose political position was undergirded by long-term experience of imperial rule. The fact that both RS 16.379 and RS 11.872 reported on tribute offered to the Hittite imperial rulers may have also contributed to the formality of the language with which the king's message was phrased. By presenting parallel acts of obeisance, these letters elevate the royal court of

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid 79.



Ugarit by elevating its queen.

RS 17.139 and RS 15.008 also report on visits to the Hittite king, but the nuance of these reports differs from RS 16.379 and RS 11.872. The opening of RS 17.139 is well preserved but the body of the letter is fragmentary. The main evidence it gives, as discussed above, is of the king identifying himself only as king, addressing his mother by her name and not a royal title, and using the order of a superior's address to an inferior, alongside formulae common to letters in which the sender shows respect to the addressee. The letter also indicates that the sender is responding to an on-going communication with his mother, one in which he must report on his future actions with regard to his stay in the Hittite court and his return to Ugarit: “*w. mnd<sup>c</sup> . k . ank . aḥš . mgy . mnd<sup>c</sup> . k . ḡgr . w . ḡu . ḡg[r] . ḡm . špš*; Now, whether I hurry to arrive or whether I stay, I will in any case stay with the Sun” (RS 17.139: 10-12).

Thus RS 17.139 presents a challenge to expected modalities of relationship, not only in its mixed use of epistolary formulae but also because the king still reports to his mother on his potential movements with regard to the Hittite court regardless of the fact that he does not address her honorifically. The letter indicates the same expectation for communication between the king and his mother on diplomatic matters found in RS 16.379 and RS 11.872. The main difference is that this letter appears to be in response to the queen's request for information: “*lḥt . šlm . k . lḡkt / umy . ḡmy*; Regarding the fact that my mother has sent me a message regarding my welfare”(RS 17.139: 5-6). Whether the fact that RS 17.139 was a reply to this previous message is the reason for the curt address

cannot be determined given the state of the tablet. Yet, the mixed formulae allow us to see that within the apparently expected communication between royal mothers and sons there was room for variance in expression.

RS 15.008 identifies the sender and addressee by their names, “Message of Talmiyānu to Tāriyelli, my mother”(RS 15.008: 1-2). The sender’s mother is not called queen, but neither is the sender identified as king. The only evidence that it may have been a message from the king is that the letter reports that the sender had appeared before the Hittite Great King and the letter is addressed to a mother who bears the name of a known queen of Ugarit. The additional evidence is that sender calls himself the guardian of the army. This aspect of the letter is the one that might offer a sense of the motivation for the shift in address.

(6) . . . ’umy (7) *td’ . ky . ’rbt* (8) *lp’n . špš* (9) *wpn . špš . nr* (10) *by . m’id . w.’um*  
(11) *tšmḥ . m’ab* (12) *w’al . twḥln* (13) *’tn . ḥrd . ’ank* (RS 15.008)

(6) . . . My mother, (7) you must know that I have entered (8) before the Sun (9) and that the face of the Sun has shone (10) upon me brightly. So may mother (11) cause Ma’abu<sup>140</sup> to rejoice, (12) may she not be discouraged, (13) for I am the guardian of the army.

In these lines, the queen is enjoined to reorient her perspective on Ugarit’s political position based on two factors: one that the sender has had a favorable audience with the Hittite Great King and the other that he is the guardian of the army. The letter expresses

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<sup>140</sup> To the question of who Ma’abu might be one can do no better than to cite Pardee’s statement on the matter: “We have no idea who this person is whom *tlmyn* would be telling *tryl* to make happy with the news of *tlmyn*’s successful audience with the Sun-king, but it would be sheer hubris on our part to think that we know more than a fraction of the families and officials and officials’ families in the Ugaritic palace, and the appearance of a new name should not surprise us”(Pardee, “Further Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography,” 221).

the sender's authority in relationship to his mother in terms of his position as the head of the army. Thus, the shift in the use of epistolary formula may reflect the fact that the sender seeks to distinguish himself on terms other than a political reciprocity with his mother in order to gain leverage in a situation in which persuasion was necessary. The use of the injunction or emphatic form "*td*ʿ, you must know," suggests such a scenario. The queen may have been in need of convincing that her son had a possible confrontation under his control.

Pardee suggests an interpretation aligned with this analysis, yet differing in key points. He suggests that the sender, Talmiyānu, was not the king, but the king's younger brother; thus the absence of the title "king" in the opening of the letter. Pardee then reasons that this younger brother addresses his mother not by her title but by her name because his "social situation, which allows him to have an audience with the Hittite king, has permitted him to address himself to his mother as he would do to an inferior."<sup>141</sup> Pardee's argument does not stand up to the fact that the most deferential letters, in which the king addresses his mother, the queen, as he would a superior and uses the prostration formula, are letters in which he reports on his audience with the Hittite Great King. An audience with the Great King does not result in the king addressing his mother as an inferior. The absence of honorific formulae in RS 15.008 is more likely the product of an effort to assert an elevated position rather than the consequence of such a position. If we accept Pardee's suggestion that this is the letter of the younger brother and not the king,

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<sup>141</sup> Pardee, "Ugaritic Letters," 89, n.3.

then the assertive manipulation of the formulae makes sense on a different level. The absence of the pairing of “the king, your son” and “my mother, the queen” could very well reflect the fact that such a reciprocal pairing and the royal relationship it connoted was not one that a younger brother could use. His only basis for authority would have been his position with respect to the army and his ability to represent the Ugaritic royal family before the Great King.

The fact that the sender of this letter asserts his status with regard to his military position is made clear when compared to another letter dealing with military concerns, RIH 78/12. The letter makes no mention of the Hittites, but its precipitous tone indicates some context for the letter. Pardee argues that the elisions of the honorific formulae that would otherwise be expected and the abbreviated nature of the ones that are used may indicate “the agitation of the military situation.”<sup>142</sup> The opening of the letter addresses the queen but does not follow with the second half of the typical address, “Say: Message of (the sender).” No salutation or divine benediction is included. The letter concerns the life or death situation of a certain ‘Abdimilki and the embattlement of the sender.

(1) *l mlkt . ’umy* (2) *’adty . l p’nk* (3) *qlt . ’id . l’ikt* (4) *’ky . nplṭ* (5) *’bdmlk . ṣ’tq* (6) *w lb . bnk* (7) *l yšqp . u ṣ’ink* (8) *w ank . tt . ymm* (9) *kl lhmt* (10) *w hm . ’inm .* (11) *’bdmlk* (12) *nplṭ . ḥ[xx] . . .* (17) *’ikmy . ḥy .* (18) *’bdmlk . hm* (19) *ymt* (20) *w ilhmn* (21) *’ank* (RIH 78/12)

(1) To the queen, my mother, (2) my lady: At your feet (3) I fall. When you sent (4) the man from Akko, (5) ‘Abdimilki, the *ṣ’tq* was saved. (6) And the heart of your son (7) he will indeed uplift and your pain (?) as well. (8) Now, as for me, for six days (9) I have done all the fighting. (10) Now if (11) ‘Abdimilki is not (12) saved a[live ?] . . . (17) However that may be (?), (18) ‘Abdimilki is alive. If

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid 93, n. 34.

(19) he should die, (20) I will go on fighting (21) on my own.<sup>143</sup>

Here, the sender writes as if from the battlefield, not to persuade his mother that all is in hand, but to keep her apprised of the state of fighting and his own position. The queen has also apparently sent ‘Abdimilki to her son as support. This letter conveys a situation in which the queen is intimately involved in military affairs. In this context an assertion that the sender is the guardian of the army would be meaningless given the apparent exigencies of the situation and the queen’s involvement. The abbreviated address of the letter makes it impossible to verify the sender’s identity other than the fact that he is the son of the queen.<sup>144</sup> What apparently was most important to this communication was to offer full respect to the queen by means of every possible title: “the queen, my mother, my lady”(RIH 78/12: 1-2). Read alongside the contents of the letter, the address suggests that the objective of the message was to show gratitude to the queen and ensure her continued support in a critical situation.

Whether the sender addressed his mother in honorific terms or not, was commanding or supplicant, several salient features emerge in the comparison of the letters RS 16.379, RS 11.872, RS 17.139, and RS 15.008. All the letters report on events at the Hittite court, and all of the letters indicate that these reports were part of on-going correspondence. RS 11.872 uses the conventional request for reply formula, “*tmny . ‘m . ‘umy . mnm . šlm . w . rgm . ttb . ly*”; There with my mother whatever is well, send word

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<sup>143</sup> This translation follows Pardee’s edition and translation in “Further Studies in Ugaritic Epistolography,” 221-223.

<sup>144</sup> Pardee, “Ugaritic Letters,” 89, n.34. Pardee argues that sender must not have been the king, or not yet the king, because he addresses the queen as “my lady”.

back to me”(11-13). RS 16.379 uses this formula and in the body of the letter promises further report on the actions of the Hittites. RS 17.139 states that it is a reply to a message the royal mother has sent. RS 15.008, in its injunction that the mother not be distressed, indicates that she has already expressed this concern in some form or would be expected to. All of these features communicate a situation in which reports to a royal woman from her son concerning Ugarit’s most crucial political relationship were an on-going feature of the internal workings of rule in Ugarit. Such a situation might be due to the particular relationship in a single generation between one royal woman and her son. Even if this is the case, the question remains what a son had to gain from his relationship with his mother. The answer can be found in the term “mother” itself. The term encodes a political reality in which one royal woman maintained political tenure through the reigns of two kings, her husband and her son. She would have already been enmeshed in the political world her son inherited long before he became king. Such a position would engender not simply the motivation for her son the king to maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with her but also quite likely situations in which the son might have to assert himself over his mother.

These letters addressed to the queen give a sense of the modalities and the political parameters of the relationship of a royal woman with her sons, yet they do not offer any particulars that could identify their historical context. Other than the name “Tariyelli” given in two of the letters, neither the senders, nor addressees, nor the Hittite sovereigns can be identified with certainty. The letters in Ugaritic were ultimately internal correspondence for an audience that would have needed none of these details to

be made explicit. This is in a sense the most telling aspect of the correspondence. In letters outside the royal family, addressees and sender are typically identified by their names. The exchanges are for a specific purpose, particular to the parties involved. The letters within the royal family, with two exceptions, are circulated between persons whose salient identity could be identified simply by title. It was as queen and king, mother and son, that senders and addressees related to each other. The letters thus represents communication formalized along the lines of established modes of relationship.

#### **MOTHERS AND SONS, FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS: RS 34.124 AS A PIVOTAL TEXT**

The final letter to the queen from her son, RS 34.124, provides a bridge between the Ugaritic letters discussed in this chapter and the Hittite imperial verdicts that are the subject of the following three chapters. While the text does not provide definitive evidence for its historical context, the situation it addresses has parallels with situations addressed by the imperial verdicts. The letter sets the relationship between royal mothers and sons in a broader network by including other positions in which royal women might operate: as daughters and wives. The letter brings into play the interregional political alliances that were brokered by inter-dynastic marriage. The letter thus offers two layers of internal perspectives from within the region under Hittite rule. In the first instance this letter is, like the other letters, a record of communication within the Ugaritic royal family. Secondly, it reports on the Ugaritic royal family's relationships with the royal family of the neighboring kingdom of Amurru.

Ugarit and Amurru had a long history of both alliances and conflict. The earliest surviving accord is Niqmaddu II's treaty with Aziru of Amurru from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century (RS 19.068).<sup>145</sup> The two kings pledged to end their former conflicts and annul their claims against each other. Furthermore, through a payment of 5,000 shekels of silver, Niqmaddu II acquired peace in the form of a buffer region between Ugarit and Amurru and the promise of military protection by Amurru. Both kings, Aziru of Amurru and Niqmaddu II of Ugarit, capitulated to the Hittite Great King Šuppiluliuma I and signed vassal treaties with him.<sup>146</sup> As two Hittite vassals, Ugarit and Amurru became subject to Hittite arbitration of their conflicts. This Ugaritic letter, RS 34.124, however, offers a view of relations between Ugarit and Amurru not mediated by Hittite documents or political influence.

The vehicle for the relationship between Ugarit and Amurru in this letter is a royal woman, the daughter of the king of Amurru. We know of at least two queens who came to Ugarit from Amurru, the mother and the wife of Ammistamru II. As we shall see in the next chapter, Ammistamru II's mother remained queen well into his succession into his father's kingdom, and she provided political support to her son once he was king.

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<sup>145</sup> PRU IV: 35-37, 281-86 and Shlomo Izre'el, *Amurru Akkadian a Linguistic Study, Volume 2* (Harvard Semitic Studies 41. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 88-92. See also Mario Liverani, *Storia di Ugarit nell'età degli archivi politici*, SS 6 (Rome: Centro di Studi Semitici, 1962) 361; Itamar Singer, "A Concise History of Amurru," in Izre'el, *Amurru Akkadian a Linguistic Study, Volume 2*, 155-7; and Singer, "A Political History of Ugarit," 628.

<sup>146</sup> Treaty of Šuppiluliuma I and Niqmaddu II, RS 17.340-369 A (PRU IV: 48-52) and Emmanuel Laroche, *Catalogue des Textes Hittites* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971) Text 46. Treaty of Šuppiluliuma I and Aziru, *Catalogue des Textes Hittites*, Text 49. For a discussion of the relative dating of the treaties of Niqmaddu II and Aziru's treaties with Šuppiluliuma I and their accord with each other see Singer, "A Concise History of Amurru," 156-157.



Ammistamru II's wife, as indicated in the introduction, did not fare as well. Her divorce from Ammistamru II and the subsequent negotiations concerning her exile in Amurru, her extradition to Ugarit, and her ultimate execution at the hands of Ammistamru II are documented in multiple imperial verdicts and regional accords, which shall be discussed in the following chapters.

Although both of these Amurrite women were connected to Ammistamru II, as mother and wife, and may have even overlapped in their tenure in Ugarit, not a single Hittite imperial verdict includes both of them. Indeed, other than the Ugaritic letter RS 34.124 we have no texts that document the interaction of any two contemporaneous royal women, connected to the same king as mother, wife, bride, daughter, or sister. Thus, this letter offers the only documentation, although oblique, for relationships between royal women. The position of the king's mother is the primary one established in the letter. The letter opens with the epistolary formulae of the highest register of address. While the first line of the tablet is broken the customary pairing of "the queen, my mother" and "the king, your son" can be reconstructed based on subsequent lines.<sup>147</sup>

(1) [l . mlkt . ʔumy ] (2) [rgm] (3) [tḥm .] <sup>[m]</sup>[lk . bnk] (4) [ l p]ʿn . ʔumy <sup>[.]</sup>[qlt]  
 (5) [l]<sup>[y]</sup> . ʔumy šlm <sup>[.]</sup>[ʔilm] (6) [t]ḡrk . tšl<sup>[m]</sup>[k] (7) <sup>[h]</sup>nny . mn . šl[m . kl]<sup>[l]</sup> (8)  
 tmny . mk . mnm (9) šlm . rgm . tt <b> . ly (RS 34.124)

(1) [To the queen my mother,] (2) [say:] (3) message of the] k[ing your son.]  
 (4) [At the f]eet of my mother [I fall]. (5) [Wi]th my mother {may} it be well!  
 [May the gods] (6) [g]uard you and may they keep [you] well. (7) <sup>[H]</sup>ere with  
 me [everythi]ng is wel[l]. (8) There with you, whatever (9) is well, send word  
 of that back to me.

<sup>147</sup> Pardee, "Ugaritic Letters," 90 n.15.

The surviving lines set this communication in the reciprocal framework of a queen mother and a king son. Such a framework is appropriate to a letter that addresses several dimensions of the queen's political role. As in the letters reporting on the king's visits to the Hittite court, the king is apparently absent from Ugarit. In the body of the letter, which shall be discussed below, the king asks his mother to send him armed support and to negotiate matters within Ugarit by representing him to a local council. The matter on which she must address the council concerns a woman identified as the daughter of the king of Amurru. The queen is thus implicated in military protection of the king, negotiations within Ugarit, and negotiations that in turn affect Ugarit's relationship to Amurru through the daughter of the king.

After the formal address with which the letter certainly opened, the king addresses a complaint to his mother that is revealing. She has sent him a military guard that he is not pleased with and he demands to be sent the royal guard. Not only is she in a position to broker the sending of a guard to the king; she has apparently made her own choice of whom to send and has some authority over where individual soldiers may go.

(10) *lm tl'ikn ḥpt hndn* (11) *p mšm't m<sup>[l]</sup>lk* (12) *'inn . 'im . bn . q<sup>[l]</sup>-* (13) *'im . bn . 'alyy . 'im* (14) *mšm't . mlk* (15) *<sup>[w]</sup> . <sup>[l]</sup> tlkn . tn tnm* (16) *'my . w . ttbrn . lby*

Why do you send this *ḥuptu* (soldier) and not the royal guard? If Binu-QL [-] Binu-<sup>3</sup>Alliyaya and the royal guard go (elsewhere) inform me, and you will disappoint me severely. (RS 34.124)

This complaint reveals a more significant role for this queen in military matters than did the letter RIH 78/12, discussed above. RIH 78/12 referred to a “man from Akko” whom the queen had sent to support her embattled son. The letter RS 34.124 indicates that a

queen has again sent military personnel and that she is in a position to coordinate the movements of military personnel who might go elsewhere if she did not intervene. The juxtaposition of formal address and complaint vividly brings out the range of interaction possible within the political framework aligning royal mother and son. His need for her conformity to his requests is expressed on the one hand with epistolary obeisance and on the other with forthright protest.

The following portion of the letter is the most complex. Rather than making a direct complaint to her, the king complains about the actions of the city council to whom the queen will represent his concerns. This portion of the letter offers a glimpse of the way a royal mother and son might collaborate with regard both to internal politics in Ugarit and to relations with a foreign court.

(17) *w . lḥt . bt . mlk . ʿamr* (18) <sup>[k]</sup>y . *tdbr* <sup>[.]</sup> *ʿumy* [lower edge] (19) *l . pn . qrt*  
 (20) *ʿim . ht . l . b* (21) *mṣqt . yṯ<sup>[bt]</sup>* [reverse] (22) *qrt . p . mn* (23) *l'ikt . ʿank . lḥt*  
 (24) *bt . mlk . ʿamr* (25) *ybn n . hlk* (26) *ʿm . mlk . ʿamr* (27) *w . ybl . hw . mʿit*  
 (28) *ḥrṣ . w . mrdt . l* (29) *mlk ʿamr w . lqh . hw* (30) *šmn . b . qrn h* (31) *w . yṣq .*  
*hw . l . rʾiṣ* (32) *bt mlk ʿamr* (33) *mn m* <sup>[.]</sup> *ḥ<sup>[t]</sup>* [ . . . ] (34) <sup>[k]</sup>y . *ʿumy* [ . . . ] (RS 34-124)

(17) As regards the letters (tablets) concerning the daughter of the king of ʿAmurru (18) that you, my mother, will speak (about) (19) before the city: (2) if the city (21) remains undecided, (22) then why (23) have I (myself) sent a letter (tablet) (to them) (24) concerning the daughter of the king of Amurru? (25) Yabninu has left (26) for the court of Amurru (27) and he has taken (with him) one hundred (shekels) (28) of gold and *mardatu*-cloth for (29) the king of Amurru, and he has taken (30) oil in a horn (31) and poured it on the head (32) of the daughter of the king of Amurru. (33) Whatever si[n? . . . ] (34) because my mother [ . . . ]<sup>148</sup>

<sup>148</sup> This translation follows Bordreuil and Pardee's edition and translation in *A Manual of Ugaritic*, Text 29, 242-243.

As stated above, two Ammurite royal women became queens in Ugarit, the mother and wife of Ammistamru II. In the case of Ammistamru II's wife, among the documents that record the protracted legal disputes subsequent to her divorce is a text that describes the men of Ugarit, "*mārī Ugarit*," speaking before the king (RS 16.270: 12), a scenario of governance evocative of the political dynamic portrayed here in RS 34.124. Previous interpretations of the context for RS 34.124 took as their starting point Ammistamru II's marriage and divorce of his Ammurite wife. Pardee presents these interpretations as organized around three primary proposals.<sup>149</sup> The first was Caquot's proposal that RS 34.124 concerns preparations for a marriage between the king and an Amurrite princess.<sup>150</sup> Second was Pardee's initial proposal, which he would later revise, that the letter concerns an attempted reconciliation between Ammistamru II and his Amurrite wife.<sup>151</sup> Third was Brooke's proposal that the letter concerns Ammistamru II's intention to have the official he sends to Amurru bring about the death of his Amurrite wife.<sup>152</sup> Caquot's proposal draws implicitly on the evidence for interdynastic marriages between the royal families of Ugarit and Amurru, both that of Ammistamru II's mother

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<sup>149</sup> Pardee, "Ugaritic Letters," 91 n. 20.

<sup>150</sup> André Caquot, "Hébreu et Araméen," *Annuaire du Collège de France*, 75 (1975): 431-432. Caquot presents the preliminary initial edition of RS 34.124 along with a very brief commentary in a more general presentation of work on the history of David in the books of Samuel and a ritual text from Ugarit.

<sup>151</sup> Pardee, "A New Ugaritic Letter," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 34 (1977): 3-20, but nuanced in Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, "Les Textes en cunéiformes alphabétiques," *Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville*, vol. 7 *Ras Shamra-Ougarit* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1991) 150.

<sup>152</sup> George J. Brooke, "The Textual, Formal and Historical Significance of Ugaritic Letter RS 34.124 (KTU 2.72)," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 11 (1979): 83-87.

and his wife. Pardee's initial proposal and Brooke's proposal draw explicitly on the verdicts and accords that document the marriage, exile, and eventual execution of Ammistamru II's wife. I will present these three proposals and then contrast them with the aims of my study.

Caquot reads the report of Yabninu bringing one hundred shekels of gold to the court of Amurru and anointing of the daughter of the king of Amurru with oil as evidence that the letter deals with the first step of negotiations associated with a royal marriage.<sup>153</sup> A remarkable aspect of Caquot's proposal, not taken up by later interpreters, is the way he understands this report in the context of the letter itself. He proposes that the king reports the first stage of marriage negotiations to his mother, the queen, in order to obtain her consent in moving forward. Caquot claims that letter reports on "une première étape dans les tractations en vue du mariage, que l'expéditeur de la lettre entend poursuivre, avec l'accord de sa mère et de la fiancée."<sup>154</sup> This suggestion is in line with the kind of political communication between the king and his mother evidenced in the king's reports on his diplomatic missions to the Hittite court. His official's visit to Amurru and the presentation of gold and the anointing of the daughter of the king would be yet another example of diplomatic relations between Ugarit and its neighbors upon which the king reported to his mother. Caquot is the only interpreter to bring out the implications of the fact that this event is reported in a letter addressed to the queen.

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<sup>153</sup> Caquot, "Hébreu et Araméen," 431-432. An interesting dimension of this proposal is that Caquot draws on 1 Samuel 16.1, God's command to Samuel to anoint the head of David as the next king of Israel. While Caquot does not draw out this implication, his parallel suggests an analogy between the investiture of a king and the wife of a king, which would make the latter position a political office.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid 432.

Pardee's initial analysis raised an objection to Caquot's interpretation that the anointing which the letter reports is a first step in marriage arrangements. He argues that Caquot does not account for the fragmentary appearance of the root *hṭ*['] in line 33.<sup>155</sup> Pardee suggested that this root referred to the "great sin" of which Ammistamru II's wife was accused, a crime that eventually resulted in her death at his hands. Furthermore, Pardee's initial translation of lines 20 to 22 made the daughter of the king of Amurru, not the city, the subject and positioned her in a state of distress plausible for Ammistamru II's wife. His initial translation of these lines is as follows.

(20) *ʾim . ht . l . b* (21) *mṣqt . yṭ<sup>l</sup>bt<sup>l</sup>* [reverse] (22) *qrt . p . mn* (23) *l'ikt . ʾank . lḥt*  
(24) *bt . mlk . ʾamr*

If that distressed person is willing to be reconciled to the city, then what? I, for my part, have sent letters regarding the daughter of the king of Amurru (to Amurru). (RS 34.124)<sup>156</sup>

The translation hinges on the term *mṣqt*. Caquot takes the word as deriving from the nominal form of the root *yṣq*, which he read as denoting one who has received something, in this case one who has received anointing.<sup>157</sup> He renders the line, "si désormais le coeur de celle qui a reçu l'onction (?) revient à la Ville, alors qui (enverrai-je)?"<sup>158</sup> The daughter of the king of Amurru, who might be reconciled to the city, is the anointed one, not the distressed one. Pardee's translation, "the distressed one," is based on taking *mṣqt* as a

<sup>155</sup> Pardee, "A New Ugaritic Letter," 9 and "Ugaritic Letters," 91 n.20.

<sup>156</sup> Pardee, "A New Ugaritic Letter," 4.

<sup>157</sup> Caquot, "Hébreu et Araméen," 430-431. See Pardee "A New Ugaritic Letter," 10.

<sup>158</sup> Caquot, "Hébreu et Araméen," 430.

passive participle deriving from the root *ṣwq*, “to press.”<sup>159</sup> Both interpret the act in question to be the reconciliation of the daughter of the king of Amurru to the representatives of Ugarit, the only difference is in how she is characterized.

This difference is crucial to Pardee’s initial interpretation. Her distress alongside the appearance of the root *ḥt[ʔ]* suggests that the daughter of the king of Amurru in this letter has committed an offense and is now distressed. These two factors are the main ones that cause Pardee to assign this letter to the events surrounding the divorce of Ammistamru II and the daughter of the king of Amurru, not the preparation for an interdynastic marriage.<sup>160</sup> Pardee eventually revised this argument. He continues to maintain that Caquot’s lack of consideration of the term *ḥt[ʔ]* remained a weakness in his argument, but Pardee now criticizes his own interpretation that the king in question was Ammistamru II and the daughter of the king of Amurru was his estranged wife. Pardee criticized his argument for two reasons: the first that it posited a reconciliation to which none of the international texts attests and that it relied too much on the presence of the root *ḥt[ʔ]*.<sup>161</sup> His later translation reinterpreted the term *mṣqt* as referring to the condition of the city, not the woman. His updated translation is, “if the city remains undecided,” yet he notes that more literally this would mean “remaining in a state of anguish.”<sup>162</sup> Thus,

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<sup>159</sup> Pardee, “A New Ugaritic Letter,” 10.

<sup>160</sup> Pardee marshals considerable textual comparanda that would support Caquot’s claim that the anointing of the woman’s head indicates preparation for marriage, yet he ultimately dismisses all this evidence in light of the presence of the root *ḥt[ʔ]* (Ibid 14-18).

<sup>161</sup> Pardee, “Ugaritic Letters,” 91 n.20.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid 91. See also Bordreuil and Pardee *A Manual of Ugaritic*, 143-150.

Pardee maintains his grammatical interpretation of *mšqt*, but significantly softens its meaning and reverses the subject to which it refers.

Brooke followed Pardee's initial interpretation that the letter referred to Ammistamru II and his Amurrite wife, yet he set the letter in the more dire phase of the divorce to which the international texts attest. Brooke proposes that Yabninu's journey to Amurru was not to prepare the woman for marriage or to attempt reconciliation on behalf of the king but rather to prepare her for death. Brooke agrees with Caquot on the interpretation of the word *mšqt* as "anointed one." He sees a discrepancy, however, between the mention of the woman as already "anointed" in line 21 and what follows in lines 25-32. This discrepancy is only an issue because of the way Brooke understands the verbal sequence in these subsequent lines. His translation is as follows.

*Ybnn* has gone to the king of Amurru so that he may bring 100 (shekels) of gold and the cloak to the king of Amurru, and he himself will take oil from his horn and he will pour (it) on the head of the daughter of the king of Amurru.<sup>163</sup>

The verbs *hlk*, *ybl*, *lqh*, *ysq* in these lines could either be in the perfective *qatala* form or, with the exception of *hlk*, in the infinitive form, especially as they are followed by *hw*, as Brooke renders them here. Brooke's translation reflects his understanding that Yabninu had not yet anointed the daughter of the king of Amurru at the time the letter was written. On the other hand, Caquot and Pardee take these verbs to be in the perfective form, understanding the passage to be the king's report to his mother on the actions that

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<sup>163</sup> Brooke 1979, 70.



Yabninu has already performed at his command, actions which she in turn will convey to the city.

Because Brooke understands *mšqt* in line 21 to refer to someone who as already been anointed, and at the same time he understands lines 25-32 to refer to actions which Yabninu has yet to perform, Brooke concludes that the letter assumes two acts of anointing, one in the past and one in the future. He proposes that these two acts of anointing may have been for different purposes. As to the anointing that had already taken place, implied for him in the term *mšqt*, Brooke reasons that this could either have been her anointing at her marriage or her investiture as queen.<sup>164</sup> That the first anointing was the daughter of the king of Amurru's investiture as queen is unlikely considering the fact that the king's mother is identified as queen and we have no evidence for two royal women holding this title simultaneously in Ugarit. Be that as it may, the second act of anointing, the one which has yet to occur at the time the letter was written, is the one central to Brooke's interpretation of the purpose of the letter.

Brooke agrees with Pardee's initial reading that the letter belongs to the collection of documents that concern Ammistamru II's divorce from an Amurrite royal woman. However, his reasoning for why this is the case differs from Pardee. In an incisive move, Brooke links both parts of the letter, the request for a guard and the events concerning Ammistamru II's wife. A Hittite verdict records Ammistamru II's taking his wife back from her exile in Amurru for the purpose of putting her to death in Ugarit (RS 18.06-RS

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid 75.

17.365).<sup>165</sup> The verdict states that Ammistamru II had taken troops with him to Amurru. The demands the king makes to his mother for the royal guard in RS 34.124 might reflect the situation represented in the Hittite verdict in which the king of Ugarit needed military support to enforce his will in Amurru. The accords between the kings of Ugarit and Amurru also record that Ammistamru II paid an astounding sum of 1400 shekels of gold to his wife's kinsmen in exchange for the right to put her to death (RS 17.228).<sup>166</sup> Brooke reads the 100 shekels of gold that Yabninu brings with him to Amurru as a partial payment of this price. As Pardee points out, however, Brooke's explanation for the anointing as being in preparation for death has little support. Anointing with oil prior to death is not an attested practice. Anointing prior to marriage occurs frequently.<sup>167</sup> Pardee's most current interpretation of the text is based on this understanding of the significance of anointing. He has reversed his initial claim that the text refers to the repudiated spouse of Ammistamru II. He argues instead that the letter refers to the anointing of another Amurrite princess to marry another Ugaritic king.

All of these proposals employ the methodology of this study: the effort to correlate the Ugaritic letters between unnamed kings and queens with international texts involving royal men and women who can be located in a specific historical period. Each of the proposals has its merits. Brooke's proposal, which links the demand for soldiers and the sending of a messenger to Amurru with the events of the case of Ammistamru II,

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<sup>165</sup> PRU IV: 137-8.

<sup>166</sup> PRU IV: 141-143.

<sup>167</sup> Pardee, "Ugaritic Letters," 91 n.20. Pardee, "A New Ugaritic Letter," 14-19. Bordreuil and Pardee, *A Manual of Ugaritic*, 150.

is appealing but his unconventional positing of the anointing as preparation for death remains problematic. Caquot and Pardee's interpretation of the anointing as preparation for a wedding is more plausible. The linguistic basis for interpreting *mšqt* is equivocal, given that the nominal forms of the two weak roots *yšq* and *šwq* would be indistinguishable in the consonantal text. However, Pardee's interpretation that *mšqt* derives from *šwq*, "to be distressed," fits the context better in that it suggests a reason why the queen might need to intercede with the city council. The most conservative interpretation, then, is that the letter addresses negotiations concerning an interdynastic wedding, whether of Ammistamru II or another king, in which the king asks his mother the queen to intercede with the elites of the city on his behalf. For our purposes, the most important dimension of the letter is what it conveys about the relationship between the king and his mother and about the position of the Amurrite princess.

Whereas these previous studies looked to the international texts to explain the events referred to in RS 34.124, this study seeks to identify patterns of relationship present in both the Ugaritic letters and the imperial verdicts. The difference in the audience and purpose of the letters and the verdicts allows us to understand patterns of relationships between royal women and men from two distinct vantage points. The Ugaritic letters convey the scope of the political collaboration between royal mothers and sons as it played out in their interactions with each other. Through the manipulation of epistolary conventions, the letters communicate the shifting terms on which collaboration between royal mothers and sons might take place. In contrast, the imperial legal verdicts present the consequences of relationships between particular royal women and men in an

international arena. Because the legal verdicts were composed from the vantage point of the Hittite rulers, the relationships between royal women and men are always depicted in third person discourse and set within the terms of a larger imperial system. In this context, the royal women and men may be viewed simultaneously through a variety of lenses: as mothers and sons, brothers and sisters, fathers and daughters, husbands and wives.

The letter RS 34.124 acts as a pivot between the letters and the legal verdicts. It offers a glimpse of an ongoing collaboration between a queen and her son while at the same time setting their collaboration within the broader regional network of relationships between royal households. The weakness of previous proposals on the context of RS 34.124 is that they do not deal substantively with the political dimensions of what is explicit in the document: the title of the Amurrite woman as it is juxtaposed against the reciprocal titles, “the queen, my mother” and “the king, your son.” While the queen to whom the letter is addressed is identified by her political position in Ugarit and her relationship with her son, the woman whose case the letter addresses is identified by her relationship to her father and by her father’s position in Amurru.

This juxtaposition represents the furthest extremes of the way in which a woman might function politically. While we cannot know who the father of the queen of Ugarit was, there surely was a time prior to her marriage to the king of Ugarit when her salient identity was defined by her father’s position as king of Amurru. After establishing her position as the wife of the king of Ugarit, as the queen of Ugarit, and then as the mother

of king, her paternal affiliation was clearly no longer politically relevant. It was sufficient to identify her only in terms of her own position in Ugarit and her relationship to her son. By contrast, “the daughter of the king of Amurru” is defined only by the political position into which she was born. Although she has enough connection to the king of Ugarit for him to send documents concerning her to a local council, to ask his mother to mediate with the city council concerning her, and to send an official from Ugarit to her in Amurru, “the daughter of the king of Amurru” is not defined by any political status within Ugarit in this document.

As previous proposals have suggested, several contexts for this letter might account for such a situation. She might not yet have made a marriage alliance that would give her a status beyond that of daughter, or her marriage alliance might no longer be a meaningful way to identify her because of divorce or estrangement. One option previous proposals have not considered is that her affiliation with her father the king might have been more important than any other affiliation in this situation. Her identification as the daughter of the king of Amurru implicates her father as a stakeholder in whatever decision might be made in Ugarit and implicitly frames the events the letter addresses as ones concerning two political polities. Her title, the daughter of the king of Amurru, connotes three elements at play in her status: a royal woman defined by her relationship to her father, a male ruler, and a corporate polity. The daughter of the king of Amurru represents her father and the queen of Ugarit represents her son.

The contrast in the identification of these two women—one the queen of Ugarit

and mother of the king, and the other the daughter of the king of Amurru—offers further perspective on the significance of the queen of Ugarit's titles. To be defined in a reciprocal manner as “the queen my mother” by “the king your son” represents not simply a political trajectory from wife to mother across the reign of two kings but also a fundamental transition from being defined by a father's status. Whether she was a daughter of another king or a daughter of a member of the elite, by the time the letter RS 34.124 was written, the queen was no longer identified as her father's daughter. She had established a new base of authority, both economic and political. The trajectory from being identified as a king's daughter to being identified as queen and mother of a king represents the full range of movement possible for a woman within a patrimonial royal system. The reciprocal forms of address in the letters of the king to his mother demonstrate that such shifts in position do not affect only the woman who makes them. Her political status affected the men with whom she was affiliated. The king of Ugarit self-identifies as being the son of a queen and seeks his mother's intervention and assistance. Her success in maintaining her position enabled her to assist her son in maintaining his own. By contrast, the title “daughter of the king of Amurru” indicates that either the woman had not made the transition from daughter of king to wife and mother of kings, or that she has lost the status such a transition would have afforded her.

## CONCLUSION

The Hittite legal verdicts to which this study now turns show that the Ugaritic letters do not represent unique cases of a royal women functioning as a queen during her son's rule, nor do they represent unique cases of collaboration between royal mothers and sons within the arena of diplomatic relations. In the following chapter, we will analyze two sets of imperial verdicts dealing with two royal women whose relative positions are similar to those of the two women who figure in the letter RS 34.124. Whether or not the women in the verdicts are the same ones as those in RS 34.124 is ultimately less important than the insights that the cross-section of Ugaritic letters and imperial verdicts offer. If the verdicts and RS 34.124 do deal with the same two women, Ammistamru II's mother and his Amurrite wife, the proper names used in the Ugaritic letters addressed to the queen Šarelli indicate that political collaboration between royal mothers and sons extended across successive periods. Ammistamru II ruled during the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, from approximately 1260 to 1235 BCE, and Šarelli was queen in the subsequent reigns of her husband Ibiranu and son Niqmaddu III, from approximately 1235 to 1215 BCE.

The Hittite imperial verdicts provide a historical framework for the relationships between royal women and men of Ugarit and Amurru by virtue of the fact that they record the names of the reigning Hittite Great King or his viceroy in Karkamiš, as well the proper names of the rulers of Ugarit and Amurru involved in each case. This framework allows us to discern patterns of relationship across several reigns. As we have

seen, the majority of the Ugaritic letters addressed to queens by their royal sons concern the king's interactions with the Hittite court. We suggested that one advantage this kind of communication might have provided a king was the long-term experience of the interregional political system that a queen who had maintained her position through the reigns of both her husband and her son would have possessed. By correlating the reigns of the Hittite rulers in the imperial verdicts with the sequence of rulers in Ugarit, we see that this is in fact the case. Ammistamru II's mother had not only been queen during the reign of two kings of Ugarit, she had been queen before the Hittite Great King arbitrating her case had succeeded his father and become king.

Royal women functioned in at least two capacities. As queens who maintained their position from the reign of one king to the next, they afforded political continuity in the transition from father to son. Secondly, as RS 34.124 suggests in its concern with the daughter of the king of Amurru, women functioned as points of contact between royal households. The dubious position of the daughter of the king of Amurru in RS 34.124, whether a bride on the verge of marriage or a repudiated wife, conveys the reality of the scope of what a royal women might experience in her transition from being the daughter of one king to the wife of another. While patterns of relationship existed, they were no guarantee of the status of an individual woman within the exigencies of her particular historical moment. The variation in the use of epistolary formula and address in letters from kings to their mothers shows the inevitable negotiations of relative status within a given social or political framework. The imperial verdicts allow us to examine such negotiations in particular historical moments. Thus, they afford a chance to answer more



specifically the question of what was at stake for particular royal men in their relationships with royal women and how these relationships functioned within a wider system of political kinship in Ugarit and in the imperial arena.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ROYAL MOTHERS AND SONS IN IMPERIAL PERSPECTIVE

The letters in Ugaritic between royal mothers and sons discussed in the previous chapter offer a glimpse into the dynamics of the royal family. Yet these letters on their own are not sufficient to establish a systematic understanding of how royal women mediated authority across dynastic generations and how their ongoing relationships with their sons constituted one of the critical matrices of royal power. As we have seen, the personal names of the sender and addressee are rarely indicated in the Ugaritic letters, so they offer only hints of the historical and political circumstances in which they were composed. These letters, however, are not our only evidence for the relationships between royal women and their sons. Hittite imperial legal verdicts concerning royal women have also been found at Ugarit, and they provide a political context that is lacking in the letters. The imperial verdicts record the names and filiations of the Hittite sovereign or the Hittite viceroy in Karkamiš who authorized the text and the royal figures in Ugarit and Amurru involved in the cases. When the correspondence in Ugaritic is read in counterpoint with the imperial verdicts, the communication between royal mothers and sons to which the letters attest takes on a heightened meaning as an expression of the interior workings of a larger interdynastic system. This chapter will examine two sets of Hittite imperial legal verdicts dating to the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century that illuminate expectations and anxieties concerning the political relationships between royal women and their sons.

These verdicts are part of a tablet collection in the royal palace that comprised all the legal decisions, accords, and treaties that established the relationships of successive kings of Ugarit with the imperial authorities in Hatti and Karkamiš and with the neighboring kings of Amurru. The tablets were uncovered in two small rooms along a court in the southern end of the royal palace (rooms 68, 69 and Court V/ room 152) in 1952-1953.<sup>168</sup> The texts range chronologically from the earliest treaties of Niqmadu II of Ugarit with the Hittite Great King Šuppiluliuma I and with Aziru, king of Amurru (c. 1340 BCE), to verdicts dating to the reign of ‘Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit (c. 1190/85 BCE). The chronological span of the tablets and the fact that they were all legal documents originating from outside of Ugarit indicate that their collection in this place was intentional and their preservation served an ongoing purpose. No other tablet collection at Ugarit contains this kind of chronological span or uniformity in the genre and nature of the records; thus, this collection above all others merits the term archive.<sup>169</sup> Kevin McGeough’s assertion that “this archive should no longer be differentiated as an archive of international correspondence, chronologically distinct from the Central

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<sup>168</sup> Wilfred van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar*, *Alter Orient Und Altes Testament*, Bd. 40 (Kevelaer Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon-Bercker; Neukirchener Verlag, 1991) 97-108 and William David Whitt, “Archives and Administration in the Royal Palace of Ugarit” (Duke University Dissertation, 1993): 198-216. Whitt believes that the archive was constructed during the reign of Ammistamru II when earlier tablets were transferred from the Central Archive to the new location (202). In his view this would explain the preponderance of tablets from Ammistamru II’s reign and the fact that a tablet dating to the reign of Niqmepa was found below the floor of Court V.

<sup>169</sup> This distinction in the use of the terms “tablet collection” vs. “archive” follows Jacob’s Lauinger definition. See Jacob Lauinger, “Archival practices at Old Babylonian/Middle Bronze Age Alalakh (Level VII)” (University of Chicago Dissertation, 2007): 21.

Archive” is highly problematic in terms both of his evaluation of the archaeological evidence and prior scholarship.<sup>170</sup>

What is at stake in identification of the tablet collection in rooms 68 and 69 as an archive is the contextual significance of the imperial verdicts concerning royal women. If the tablet collection is an international archive then these verdicts were not preserved haphazardly as records of the affairs of queens, but rather were considered crucial components of the imperial and interdynastic record represented in the archive as a whole. From this perspective, the fact that twenty percent of the datable imperial judicial tablets from the Southern Archive center on royal women should give us pause.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> McGeough, *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007) 239. McGeough’s assertion is based on a misreading of Whitt’s argument concerning the original location of the archive. Whitt’s argument is precisely that moving the international texts from the Central Archive to the Southern Archive was an indication of the effort to differentiate and preserve a tablet collection that needed to be well-organized and readily accessible in cases of dispute. Whitt argues that “the evidence for the extreme care given to these tablets can be seen in three practices that are unique to the south archive: the use of labels to identify particular tablets more easily, the keeping of multiple copies of important tablets, and requesting a new copy of a tablet that had broken, even if the tablet was quite old” (Whitt, “Archives and Administration in the Royal Palace of Ugarit” 223). Furthermore, in denying that this tablet collection is an archive, McGeough does not give sufficient credit to van Soldt’s meticulous documentation or to Millard’s argument that the late economic tablets found in Court V had been contained in a basket, not fired in a kiln in the courtyard, and should not be considered in primary deposition. See Alan Millard, “The Last Tablets of Ugarit,” in *Le Pays d’Ougarit autour de 1200 Av. J.-C.: Histoire et Archéologie, Actes Du Colloque International, Paris, 28 Juin-1 Juillet 1993*, ed. Maurice Szymer Marguerite Yon, and Pierre Bordreuil (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1995) 119. McGeough cites Millard’s theory but does not seem to follow his conclusion that there was no necessary relationship between these economic texts and the Southern Archive.

<sup>171</sup> Whitt counts a total of 70 datable imperial legal tablets, correlated with the kings of Ugarit: Niqmaddu II, 10 tablets; Niqmepa, 17 tablets; Ammistamru II, 34 tablets; Ibiranu, 4 tablets; Niqmaddu III, 2 tablets; and Ammurapi, 3 tablets (Whitt, “Archives and Administration in the Royal Palace of Ugarit,” 202). Fifteen of these tablets from the Southern Archive concern royal women. Nine texts, counting singly each of the three joined tablets, concern Ammistamru II’s divorce from the daughter of Bentešina: RS 17.159 (PRU IV: 126-127); RS 17.396 (PRU IV: 127-128); RS 17.348 (PRU IV: 128), RS 18.06-17.365 (PRU IV: 137-8); RS 17.082 (PRU IV: 147-148); RS 17.116 (PRU IV: 132-134); RS 17.228 (PRU IV: 141-143); RS 17.372 A-17.360A (PRU IV 139-141); RS 17.318-17.349A (PRU IV: 144-146). Four tablets concern Aḥatumilki and her sons: RS 17.352 (PRU IV: 121-122); RS 17.035 (PRU IV: 123); with fragments of two duplicate verdicts RS 17.362 (PRU IV: 123-124) and RS 17.367 (PRU IV: 124). Two late tablets, sealed by

The archival context of the imperial verdicts concerning royal women and the percentage they make up of the surviving texts indicate that relations between royal sons and their mothers, like those between royal husbands and wives, were fundamental to interdynastic politics and Hittite imperial ambitions in Syria.

Royal women and men figure on several levels in these texts. They are human beings with physiological, reproductive relationships and political symbols whose kinship ties conceived on the basis of these relationships broker economic and military alliances. “Succession” becomes the way of expressing the concomitant relationship between physical and political reproduction. Women operated on two axes in this system, as mediating links between polities through interdynastic and vassal marriages and as agents in dynastic succession within polities. The divorce and succession conflicts within Ugarit that were brought before the Hittite imperial powers represent moments of rupture along both these axes. Yet, it is precisely at such moments of rupture that the workings of a system are laid bare. The assumptions and anxieties concerning particular royal women that emerge in the verdicts indicate standard expectations for relations between queens and their sons, husbands, fathers, and brothers. The prohibitions and limitations dictated in these verdicts express the extent of the authority that a royal woman might otherwise have been expected to exercise. The legal verdicts that are the focus of this chapter arose from two such cases of political rupture in which the relationship between a royal woman and her son was fundamental both to the conflict and to its resolution.

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Talmitešub, king of Karkamiš, concern Eḫli-Nikkalu, a Hittite royal woman (RS 17.226 and RS 17.355; PRU IV: 208-10).

Both cases date from the reigns of the Ugaritic king Ammistamru II, the Hittite sovereign Tudḫaliya IV, and the Hittite viceroy in Karkamiš, Ini-Tešub. Both cases are concerned with dynastic succession in Ugarit and either assert or seek to limit a queen's exercise of power in moments of political transition. The first case concerns Ammistamru II's collaboration with his mother in securing his power as king over against his brothers, and the second case concerns Ammistamru II's anxiety about his divorced wife collaborating with their son in reestablishing her position. Taken together these two sets of verdicts indicate that the office of the queen was not a mere auxiliary position. A royal woman's ability to remain in power as queen over the course of the reign of her husband into the reign of her son could shape the dynamics of succession and mechanisms of rule. Both cases indicate an interdependence between royal women and their sons in maintaining their respective positions.

The crucial difference between the two cases is the position of each royal woman within Ugarit and what was at stake in her status. Although the verdicts themselves appear to be bound within a tight chronological framework, set within the reigns of the same kings of Hatti, Karkamiš, and Ugarit, the political spans of the reigns of the two queens involved in these disputes were much broader in scope. Both women were Amurrite princesses who came to Ugarit from Amurru by virtue of interdynastic marriages between these two polities. Yet internal events within Hatti, the position of Amurru with respect to Hatti, and the resulting political constellation of Hittite-controlled Syria shifted dramatically between these two marriages. When Aḫatumilki, the future mother of Ammistamru II, came to Ugarit, the royal family of Amurru had not

experienced any direct Hittite intervention in its dynastic succession. The alliance formed by her marriage to Niqmepa was purely between the ruling families of Ugarit and Amurru.<sup>172</sup> Not so in the case of Ammistamru II's wife. By the time she came to Ugarit, Bentešina, king of Amurru, had been already been deposed and exiled by the Hittite Great King Muwattalli II and then reinstated by Ḫattušili III over the course of the upheavals in Syria and Hatti that followed the Battle of Qadeš in 1275 BCE. Bentešina's status, the status of his son and successor Šaušgamuwa, and the status of his daughter were established in terms of their connection to the Hittite royal family. While Aḫatumilki's position as queen was independent of Hittite influence, every aspect of the younger queen's fate required imperial arbitration.

#### **AḪATUMILKI AND THE DAUGHTER OF BENTEŠINA**

While some debate surrounds the dating of Aḫatumilki's marriage to Niqmepa, it certainly preceded the Battle of Qadeš in 1275 BCE, which means that Aḫatumilki maintained her position as queen in Ugarit through the tumultuous first decades of the 13<sup>th</sup> century into what has been termed the "*pax Hethitica*."<sup>173</sup> The data available for

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<sup>172</sup> Pintore argues, moreover, that such an alliance was likely not the first of its kind but was only the most recent one in a series over the course of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, which constituted an integral part of the long-term political and economic relations between the two Syrian kingdoms dating from the late Amarna period: "La nostra impression e che, in effetti, tra i due regni siriani si sia creato fin dalla tarda eta amarniana un rapporto di simbiosi politico-economica la cui controparte naturale dovette essere l'imparentamento delle dinastie" (*Il Matrimonio Interdinastico*, 79).

<sup>173</sup> Itamar Singer's phrase defines the period that has been the focal point of his major scholarly work, the international politics of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. See Yoram Cohen, Amir Gilan, Jared Miller, "Introduction," *Pax Hethitica: Studies on the Hittites and their Neighbours in Honour of Itamar Singer*, Studien zu den Bogazköy-Texten, Band 51. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010) 2-3.

establishing the date of her marriage come from the royal seal on the tablet that lists the considerable wealth she brought with her from Amurru to Ugarit on the occasion of her marriage (RS 16.146-161).<sup>174</sup> The front of the tablet is impressed at the head with the anepigraphic Amurrite dynastic seal, which is identified in the final line of the text as the seal of the king DU-tešub, who ruled Karkamiš approximately 1314-1312 BCE (RS 16.146-161: 44).<sup>175</sup> Itamar Singer argues that the most logical explanation is that she was the daughter of DU-tešub.<sup>176</sup> The problem this presents is that synchronisms between Tudḫaliya IV and Ini-Tešub require that the case under discussion here concerning Aḫatumilki and her sons could have been no earlier than 1239 BCE, meaning that she would have been at least 90 years old at the time.<sup>177</sup> Singer argues that given the equally long reigns of her contemporaries Rameses II, Bentešina, and Puduḫepa, queen of Hatti, such a span of political activity is plausible. On the other hand, van Soldt points out that the text does not state that Aḫatumilki is the daughter of DU-tešub, merely that the seal

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<sup>174</sup> Feldman states well what others have observed, that while the types of items and the format of the list might suggest that it is a dowry, similar to the inventories found at Amarna (EA 22 and 25), the text states clearly that the items are *ú-nu-te.MEŠ*, the belongings of the queen. Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 108.

<sup>175</sup> PRU III, pl. LI and Ug III, fig. 45-47. See Nougayrol's discussion in PRU IV: 178 and Singer, "A Concise History of Amurru," 160. These approximate dates for his reign and those of the other kings of Amurru and Ugarit are the ones Singer proposes. These dates are based on synchronisms with Aššur and Egypt that correlate with recent suggestions for a lowered Hittite chronology based on the shortening of Šuppiluliuma I's reign to about twenty years. See Singer, "A Political History of Ugarit," 607-8. The sequencing of these dates is also in line with the relative chronology that van Soldt proposed based on prosopographical data for the queens and major scribes as well as the kings. See van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 1-19.

<sup>176</sup> Singer, "A Concise History of Amurru," 160.

<sup>177</sup> This number is arrived at by assuming she would have been at least 13 years old at the time of her marriage and was married to Niqmepa at the latest date possible before DU-Tešub's death. See van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 14; van Soldt, "The Queens of Ugarit," 70; and Singer "A Political History of Ugarit," 642.



belongs to him.<sup>178</sup> Since the seal is anepigraphic, rather than necessarily indicating the current king, it could have been used simply to invoke the authority of a royal forebearer. Van Soldt finds support for this interpretation in the fact that the same seal was used and attributed to Aziru on a tablet from an even later period, the accord between Bentešina's successor Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II concerning Ammistamru II's repudiated wife (RS 17.360-372A).<sup>179</sup> Thus in van Soldt's view, Aḫatumilki could have been the daughter of a later king of Amurru and could have been married to Niqmepa later in his reign.

Either argument is plausible, but only two features of the points raised are salient for considering the tenure of Aḫatumilki in the context of the events of the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century. First and most basic is that the only seal used on her dowry was the anepigraphic seal associated with Amurrite kings dating at least as far back as Aziru, thus likely to a period likely before Amurru's subjugation to Hatti established in the treaty between Aziru and Šuppiluliuma I (c. 1340 BCE). The glyptics on this seal were Syrian.<sup>180</sup> When the same anepigraphic, Syrian-style dynastic seal was used in the later period by Šaušgamuwa, it was impressed alongside Šaušgamuwa's personal seal which contained Hittite glyptics and a hieroglyphic legend that identified him as a Hittite

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<sup>178</sup> van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 14 and "The Queens of Ugarit," 70.

<sup>179</sup> PRU IV: 139-141.

<sup>180</sup> Singer, "Hittite Cultural Influence in the Kingdom of Amurru," in *La Circulation des Biens, des Personnes et des Idées dans le Proche-Orient Ancien, Actes de la XXXVIIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Paris, 8-10 Juillet 1991*, D. Charpin and F. Joannès, eds. (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1992) 233.

prince.<sup>181</sup> This addition of Hittite imperial iconography alongside a Syrian royal seal reflects the significant changes in the relationship between Amurru and Hatti. As we shall see, Šaušgamuwa was the offspring of the vassal marriage between Bentešina and the Hittite princess Gaššuliyawiya, and he also married another Hittite princess when he succeeded his father as king of Amurru. Šaušgamuwa's use of this Hittite seal signaled his connections to the Hittite imperial family and by extension the allegiance of Amurru to Hatti. The fact that Aḫatumilki's dowry was authorized only with the sign of Amurrite dynastic rule communicates a historical setting in which the cultural affiliation and political agency of Amurru was yet to be shaped by Hittite influence.

The second salient feature of the dating of her marriage, not considered either by Singer or van Soldt, is that its *terminus ante quem* could not have been later than 1275 BCE. After a rule of more than 50 years, Niqmepa died and was succeeded by his and Aḫatumilki's son, Ammistamru II, in approximately 1260 BCE. The verdict under discussion indicates that Aḫatumilki had at least three sons by Niqmepa. From the perspective of simply marriage and birth, it is not impossible that Aḫatumilki married Niqmepa within the last 15 years of his long life, during 1275 BCE or thereafter, and gave birth to three sons who were all under the age of 15 when Ammistamru II, the designated heir among them, succeeded his father. However, from the perspective of the political situation in Amurru and the rest of Syria during this period, such a scenario is unlikely. In 1275 BCE the competition between the rulers of Egypt and Hatti for control

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid. See also Susan Helft, *Patterns of Exchange/ Patterns of Power: A New Archaeology of the Hittite Empire* (PhD Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2010) 43-49.

over Syria, which had been waged by proxy through their claims on Syrian vassal kingdoms, erupted into direct warfare. In the fourth year of his reign Rameses II moved forces northward along the Phoenician coast with the aim of reclaiming control of former vassal kingdoms, including Amurru.<sup>182</sup> His forces met those of the Hittite Great King Muwattalli II at Qadeš. The ensuing battle is recorded in great detail in five Egyptian temples, in images and texts that claim Ramses II's victory over the Hittites.<sup>183</sup> The claim is not likely true, given the fact that after the battle Muwattalli II reestablished control over these vassal kingdoms, Amurru in particular.

Amurru had been a vassal of Hatti since the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century; however, in the face of the invading Egyptian forces, Bentešina, king of Amurru, was forced to submit to Ramses II. After the conclusion of the battle of Qadeš, the Hittite Great King Muwattalli II deposed Bentešina, took him back in exile to Hatti, and installed another king in his place. The royal family of Amurru would hardly have been able to muster the political and material resources to broker an interdynastic marriage in this turbulent period. The inventory of Aḥatumilki's possessions recorded in association with her marriage represents a transfer of considerable wealth from Amurru to Ugarit: 53 expenditures

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<sup>182</sup> Prior to Ramses II's incursions, Sety I of Egypt had also campaigned in northern Syria. The visual program of his war monument claims includes an attack on Amurru. See William J. Murnane, *The Road to Kadesh: a Historical Interpretation of the Battle Reliefs of King Sety I at Karnak* (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1985) 52-8 and Trevor Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites* (New York: Oxford University Press 2005) 228. Singer argues that "there are no serious grounds to doubt the historicity of this Syrian campaign of Sety I" (Singer, "A Concise History of Amurru," 165).

<sup>183</sup> These temples include those at Karnak, Luxor, Abydos, and Abu Simbel, as well as Rameses' temple near the Valley of the Kings, and is typically attested in two versions, a lengthy literary version and a shorter report that accompanies the reliefs. These inscriptions record a staggering number of forces on both sides, impressive even for the scale of standard imperial propaganda. See Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, 234-238 and Liverani, *International Relations in the Ancient Near East, 1600-1100 BC* (New York: Palgrave, 2001) 119-121 for divergent interpretations of the rhetoric of these texts.

(ZI.MEŠ, *šitū*) of jewelry and luxury items of gold, silver, and precious stones; 80 gowns and garments; 100 bolts of wool and other fabric; ivory, gold, ebony and lapis lazuli inlaid furniture; thousands of talents of bronze jugs, bowls, cups, and lamps; and 24 ivory items (RS 16.146-161: 1-43). It unlikely that such wealth, let alone a royal woman, would travel from Amurru and Ugarit in the midst of the regional warfare between Egypt and Hatti that twice overturned the political allegiances of the kingdom of Amurru and led to the overthrow of its king.

Thus, when one shifts the focus of analysis from identifying the Amurrite king who affixed his seal to the inventory of Aḫatumilki's possessions to considering the wider political conditions under which such a marriage could have taken place, what emerges is a view of a woman who maintained power through tumultuous events in Syria over the course of a period which thus far has only been defined in terms of the succession of male rulers. Aḫatumilki maintained her position as queen through the reconquering of her home kingdom by the Egyptians, warfare between the Hittites and the Egyptians that took place within 150 kilometers of her new kingdom, Ugarit, and the Hittite overthrow of the king of Amurru who was likely her brother.<sup>184</sup> Although she had been sent to Ugarit with considerable wealth from her royal family in Amurru, Aḫatumilki successfully established a tenure in Ugarit that was not dependent on the changing fortunes of her homeland or the ability of her family to provide her continued support.

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<sup>184</sup> If Aḫatumilki was, in the end, the daughter of DU-tešub, as Singer argues, then Bentešina, son of Duppi-tešub, would have been her nephew. If she were rather the daughter of Duppi-tešub, Bentešina would be her brother. These two kings are the only reasonable candidates to have been her father; van Soldt's suggestion that she could have been the daughter of Bentešina is highly unlikely. The earliest date for Bentešina's accession is around 1290, the period in which Sety I of Egypt began his campaigns in Syria.

The strength of her position as queen and her authority to mediate the dispute between her sons after her husband Niqmepa's death can thus be understood as an extension of the authority she had already firmly established within Ugarit during Niqmepa's reign.<sup>185</sup>

Aḫatumilki was a figure from a political system that had set the stage for the one reflected in the legal verdicts in which she appears. She came to Ugarit while the Hittite Great King Muwattalli II reigned; she remained queen of Ugarit into the reign of Tudḫaliya IV, the Great King who arbitrated her sons' case. Tudḫaliya IV was the third in the series of Hittite Great Kings who ruled after Muwattalli II: Muwattalli II's son Urḫi-tešub succeeded his father, Muwattalli II's brother Ḫattušili III overthrew Urḫi-tešub, and Tudḫaliya IV then succeeded Ḫattušili III, his father. Aḫatumilki had thus lived through not only the regional warfare between Egypt and Hatti and the subsequent regime changes in Amurru, she had also lived through the coup in Hatti that established the basis for the rule of the Great King who arbitrated her case.

The historical reconstruction that emerges from correlating the evidence for Aḫatumilki's reign with events in the wider political scene allows us to give substance to what could only be intuited in the Ugaritic letters discussed in the previous chapter. I argued that the king's address to "the queen, my mother" in these letters encoded a political trajectory that shed light on why a king might report international political affairs to his mother. The term "mother" combined with "queen" indicated that, by

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<sup>185</sup>A major feature of this case, which has consistently been overlooked, is that fact that the offense against her son the king was not brought by the sons of another wife of Niqmepa, but by other sons of Aḫatumilki. While Ammistamru II's own position as king might have been threatened by his brothers, Aḫatumilki's status as queen and mother of the king, was not threatened by competition with any other royal woman.

definition, the woman whom the king addressed had held her position as queen not only prior to his reign but prior to his birth. She thus would have provided in her person and tenure a link to the context which had shaped the international relations her son inherited from his father. Thus, it was reasonable to assume that the queen, his mother, would have been an advantageous person with whom to consult on negotiating such relations within the course of his own rule. However, nothing in the Ugaritic letters allows us to test such an assumption with any historical specificity. In the case of Aḫatumilki, however, the dramatic conditions under which she maintained her position as queen offer a vivid example of the kind of political experience and resilience a woman might carry with her into the reign of her son.

The case of the later Amurrite princess, the repudiated wife of Ammistamru II, could not have been more different from that of Aḫatumilki. Although Ammistamru II's wife clearly functioned as queen in Ugarit, received tribute and ceremonial gifts commensurate with that position, and was the mother of the heir as well as the mother of other royal children, all these sources of power were taken from her. She received initial support from her royal family in Amurru when she lost power in Ugarit and was able to retain the personal wealth she had brought into her marriage, but her family was not ultimately able to preserve her status or even her safety in Amurru. Furthermore, unlike Aḫatumilki, her status in Ugarit and in Amurru was dictated by imperial arbitration. Disputes concerning this divorce engendered fifteen surviving tablets involving the kings of Ugarit, Amurru, Karkamiš, and Hatti. These texts include a series of imperial verdicts issued by Tudḫaliya IV and Ini-Tešub as well as accords between Ammistamru II and

Šaušgamuwa that establish the terms of her divorce, exile, extradition, and eventual execution at the hands of Ammistamru II. Her case is the prime example of what the *pax Hethetica* meant for the Syrian kingdoms. The marriage between Ammistamru II and the daughter of Bentešina, unlike the marriage between Niqmepa and Aḫatumilki, represented the intersection of imperial and interdynastic alliances and the collision of their respective interests.

The collision of power and interest in her case is expressed in the constellation of terms by which she is identified. Her name is never given in any of the surviving accords or verdicts. Instead, she is referred to by a variety of circumlocutions: daughter of Bentešina, sister of Šaušgamuwa, wife of Ammistamru II, mother of his heir Utrišarruma, and most frequently “the daughter of the Great Lady.”<sup>186</sup> The final term, “Great Lady, is the key to understanding the stakes of the conflict. Cord Kühne initially argued and Singer has persuasively made the case with reference to the Hittite royal title DUMU.SAL GAL that the designation “daughter of the Great Lady” identified this woman as the daughter of Gaššuliyawiya, the Hittite princess married to Bentešina as part of the provisions of the vassal treaty between Bentešina and Ḫattušili III.<sup>187</sup> This treaty represented the culmination of events in Amurru and Hatti following the Battle of Qadeš

<sup>186</sup> The publication of RS 1957.1 has established that all these terms identify the same woman. She is referred to in this text by a series of appositions: “<sup>1</sup>*a-mis-tam-ri* LUGAL <sup>kur.uru</sup>*ú-ga-ri-it* <sup>f</sup>*bí-it-ta ra-bi-ti* DAM-sú DUMU.MUNUS <sup>1</sup>ZAG.ŠEŠ LUGAL <sup>kur</sup>*a-mur-ri iš-tu É-šu KUR-šu i-ta-bá-ak-ši*; *Ammistamri šar Ugarit bitta rabīti aššassu mārat Bentešina šar Amurru ištu bītīšu mātīšu itabakši*” (6-7) and “<sup>1</sup><sup>d</sup>IS<sub>8</sub>TÁR-mu-wa LUGAL <sup>kur.uru</sup>*a-mur-ri* <sup>f</sup>*bi-it-ta ra-bi-ti* NIN-šu <sup>iš-tu</sup> É.GAL-<sup>li</sup>-šu <sup>ša</sup> <sup>kur.uru</sup>*a-mur-ri i-tá-bá-ak-ši*; *Šaušgamuwa šar Amurri bitta rabīti aḫātīšu ištu ekallīšu ša Amurri itabakši*” (9-11).

<sup>187</sup> Cord Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 5 (1973): 177 and Singer, “The Title ‘Great Princess’ in the Hittite Empire,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 21 (1991): 334. Detailed discussion of Kühne and Singer’s arguments and the development of the scholarly consensus concerning this identification will be presented in the following chapter.

that ushered in a new era in the “*pax Hethetica*” under the Hittite Great King Ḫattušili III. A review of these events and an examination of the terms of the treaty will establish the stakes of her case and why her status was a matter of imperial concern.

When the armies of Hittite Great King Muwattalli II defeated Rameses II's forces at Qadeš, Muwattalli II took measures to reestablish Hittite dominance in Syria by retaliating against vassals who had capitulated to the Egyptians. As the treaty between Bentešina and Ḫattušili III records, Muwattalli II removed Bentešina from his throne and took him to Hatti as a prisoner in recompense for his disloyalty. However, Ḫattušili III requested that his brother Muwattalli II give Bentešina into his protection, and he subsequently brought him to Hakpiš and gave him a household (CTH 92).<sup>188</sup> Singer sees Bentešina's residence in Hakpiš under the tutelage of Ḫattušili III as a period of “re-education” that instigated the Hittite acculturation of the royal family of Amurru.<sup>189</sup> This alliance between Bentešina and Ḫattušili III was brought to fruition when Ḫattušili III gained control of Hatti. Ḫattušili III claims in the treaty, “When Muwattalli, Great King, went [to] his fate, I, Ḫattušili, took my seat upon the throne of my father. I released Bentešina for a second time to (!) [the land of Amurru]. I assigned to him the household of his father and the throne of kingship”(CTH 92).<sup>190</sup>

The significant fact omitted in the historical prologue to this treaty is that when Muwattalli II went to his fate, his designated successor was not his brother Ḫattušili III

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<sup>188</sup> Gary Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1999) 101, no. 16: 11-15.

<sup>189</sup> Singer, “A Concise History of Amurru,” 168 and “A Political History of Ugarit,” 644.

<sup>190</sup> Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 101, no. 16: 16-18.



but his son Urḫitešub, whom Ḫattušili III deposed in a coup that Houwink ten Cate argues “had a lasting impact on the inner stability of the country.”<sup>191</sup> Singer argues further that “Although in many respects the age of Ḫattušili III and Puduḫepa is characterized by successful measures at home and a conciliatory policy abroad, the moral consequences of Ḫattušili III’s usurpation weighed heavily on the Hittite state and eventually contributed to its ruination.”<sup>192</sup> This underside of Ḫattušili III’s successful imposition of rule in Hatti and in Syria must be kept in mind when evaluating the relationship with Bentešina that Ḫattušili III set out in the treaty. Bentešina’s reinstatement in Amurru under Ḫattušili III’s protection was initiated with marriages between Ḫattušili III’s daughter Gaššuliyawiya and Bentešina and between Ḫattušili III’s son Nerikkaili and a daughter of Bentešina. Yet these marriages were not any more equal than the terms of the treaty. The only bride whose future status is secured is Ḫattušili III’s daughter. Ḫattušili III arguably had much to gain in terms of his own legitimacy as the new dynast in Hatti in the lineage he established through his daughter Gaššuliyawiya in the royal house of Amurru. The treaty stipulates:

[I have given] Princess Gaššuliyawiya to the land of Amurru, to the royal house, to Bentešina, [as] his wife. She now possesses queenship [in the land] of Amurru. In the future the son and grandson of my daughter shall [exercise] kingship in the land of Amurru . . . . No one shall take the kingship of the land of Amurru from Bentešina, or from the hand of his son or his grandson, the progeny of Bentešina and the progeny of my daughter. The son of Bentešina and his grandson, the progeny of Bentešina and the son of my daughter, shall hold the kingship in the land of Amurru. (CTH 92)<sup>193</sup>

<sup>191</sup> P. H. J. Houwink ten Cate, “Urhi-Teshub Revisited,” *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 51 (1994): 233.

<sup>192</sup> Singer, “A Political History of Ugarit,” 647.

<sup>193</sup> Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 101, no. 16, lines 18-21, 29-32

The succession in Amurru thus becomes twice-fathered: future kings are not simply the offspring of Bentešina but the offspring of the Hittite Great King through the mediation of his daughter. The stipulations that no one shall take the kingship of the land of Amurru away from the offspring of Bentešina and his daughter is as much a defense of Ḫattušili III's own line of descent as that of Bentešina.

The subsequent verdicts concerning the divorce between Ammistamru II and Bentešina's daughter that refer to her as the "daughter of the Great Lady" and her brothers as the "sons of the Great Lady" evoke the elevated status which Ḫattušili III mandated for Gaššuliyawiya's descendants in Amurru (RS 16.270, RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A-17.360 A, RS 17.318-17.349 A, RS 18.06-17.365; RS 17.082; RS 1957.1).<sup>194</sup> Thus the divorce between Ammistamru II and "the daughter of the Great Lady" was not simply a matter of keeping peace between Ugarit and Amurru but of managing the demands of a valuable vassal against the honor and entitlements of Ḫattušili III's line in Amurru. Both sets of the verdicts, those concerning Ammistamru II's mother Aḫatumilki and those concerning his wife, deal explicitly with succession in Ugarit, but they also evoke issues of political legitimacy in the wider imperial context in which the cases were arbitrated.

The close reading of the verdicts which follows shows that although both cases were arbitrated under the same authorities, Tudḫaliya IV in Hatti and Ini-Tešub in Karkamiš, their intervention in each case differs markedly. The level of imperial

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<sup>194</sup> RS 16.270 (PRU IV: 134-6 and PRU III: 41-4); RS 17.228 (PRU IV: 141-3); RS 17.372 A-17.360 A (PRU IV: 139-141); RS 17.318-17.349 A (PRU IV: 144-6); RS 18.06-17.365 (PRU IV: 137-8); RS 17.082 (PRU IV: 147-8). RS 1957.1 in Lauren Fisher, *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1971) 11-21.

intervention is ultimately dictated by the status of the royal woman at the center of each case. Their differing statuses were not so much a product of personality or exceptional behavior but of the political exigencies in which each established her tenure as queen. As the foregoing discussion has shown, Aḫatumilki came to Ugarit before the turbulent events that made the royal family in Amurru an extension of the dynastic claims of Ḫattušili III. Aḫatumilki is not identified as the daughter of an Amurrite king but simply as the queen of Ugarit, because she had long established herself in a position defined purely in terms of the constellation of power in Ugarit. The reverse is true for the “daughter of Bentešina.” Although the verdicts clearly indicate that she had functioned as queen of Ugarit and was the mother of the heir, she is defined primarily in terms of her relationship to the royal family of Amurru. This identification represents both strategy and necessity. Identifying her as the daughter of a foreign king rhetorically stripped her of her status as queen in Ugarit. On the other hand, her lineage as Bentešina’s daughter was necessary to acknowledge because it was this lineage that made her case a matter of imperial concern.

This historical perspective is essential in evaluating the rhetoric and the stakes of the imperial verdicts. Keeping in view the differences in the political conditions in which each royal woman established her power also allows us to see the underlying commonalities in the expectations of the role of a queen that were in the first case confirmed and in the other repudiated. As different as the outcomes are in each verdict, both express the expectation that a queen would continue to maintain her position after the death of her husband and that a crucial component of this position was her

relationship with her royal offspring, particularly her reigning son. The following discussion will take up each case in turn, analyzing the terms in which the parties to the case and the authorities overseeing it are identified and how what is stated, what is assumed, and what is silenced establish the parameters of the authority of a royal woman with respect to the expectations of what queenship entailed. Central to this effort is the conviction that legal tablets were understood by the parties involved to convey authority in the very materiality of their inscription. As is standard for legal texts, the closing formulae of these verdicts refer reflexively to the tablet itself as a witness, stating that if one of the parties to the suit should try in the future to contest the verdict, “this tablet will defeat them; *tuppu annû ile*”*ēšunūti*.” The tablets do not simply record legal verdicts, they claim in their being a perpetual power to enforce the relations that produced them. Thus, close attention to their language, syntax, and rhetorical structure is critical.

#### “AḤATUMILKI, THEIR MOTHER, QUEEN OF UGARIT”: THE MAKING OF KINGS

The first case concerns the conflict that the queen Aḥatumilki mediated between her son Ammistamru II, the reigning king, and his brothers Ḫišmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma, two of her other sons, at some point after the death of her husband Niqmepa. What survive of the proceedings are two tablets and two fragments.<sup>195</sup> The sole unbroken tablet is the verdict of Ini-Tešub, king of Karkamiš (RS 17.352). The tablet containing the

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<sup>195</sup> RS 17.352, RS 17.035, RS 17.362, RS 17.367 (PRU IV: 121-4).

verdict of Tudḫaliya IV, king of Ḫatti is broken at the sixteenth line of text and along the right edge of the obverse (RS 17.035). One of the fragments may have been part of this Hittite text (RS 17.362). The other likely survives from a third tablet, now lost (RS 17.367). The language, structure, and content of Ini-Tešub's verdict (RS 17.352) and Tudḫaliya IV's verdict (RS 17.035) appear to have been nearly identical. The presenting issue is that Ḫišmišarruma and IR-Šarruma, the sons of Aḫatumilki and brothers of Ammistamru II, have committed an offense against both their mother, the queen, and their brother, the king. Their mother the queen Aḫatumilki has given them their share of the patrimonial inheritance, which includes only their own moveable property. While the Hittite text breaks off at this point, the Karkamiš text continues. Aḫatumilki has exiled Ḫišmišarruma and IR-Šarruma to Cyprus and made them swear an oath that neither they nor their descendants will make any further claims against Ammistamru II or his descendants. The language of the oath that Aḫatumilki has made her sons swear is then reiterated by the imperial dictum. The tablet closes with the standard legal coda that if Ḫišmišarruma and IR-Šarruma, their sons, or the sons of their sons try in the future to contest the verdict, “this tablet will defeat them; *tuppu annû ile*”ēšunūti.”

These texts represent the intersection of royal and imperial authority. The most overt exercise of authority is expressed in the fact that the verdicts were produced under the auspices of the Hittite sovereign and his viceroy in Karkamiš and then archived in the Ugaritic royal palace. Unlike other Hittite vassals, Ugarit's successive vassal treaties with Hatti never included a stipulation concerning the right of the Hittite sovereign to determine Ugarit's dynastic succession. Yet in this situation, Hittite imperial edicts

confirm the authority of Ammistamru II over against his two brothers. On closer inspection, however, the verdicts indicate a more complex political situation than simple imperial intervention in Ugaritic affairs. The Hittite and Karkamiš authorities are not so much resolving a dynastic dispute as they are authorizing actions that have already been put into motion within Ugarit. The syntax of the text conveys a sequence of events in which the conflict in Ugarit and Aḫatumilki's resolution of the conflict had already taken place prior to the case being brought before the imperial representatives.

The complete surviving verdict from Karkamiš is structured into three main sections. The first section is the standard formal statement of imperial filiation that establishes the basis of authority of the sovereign arbitrating the case. The sovereign, in this case Ini-Tešub, is identified in the first line in the standard phrase, “*ana pāni RN*, in the presence of or before RN.” Ini-Tešub is then identified as the son of the son of Šarrukušuḫ, the first king of the Hittite dynasty in Karkamiš. In the Hittite text Tudḫaliya IV is identified as the son of the son of the son of the Great King Šuppiluliuma I who established Hittite hegemony in Syria (RS 17.352: 1-3; cf. Hittite text RS 17.035: 1-5).<sup>196</sup> The second section, which constitutes the main section of the verdict, details the events

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<sup>196</sup> What goes unstated in these parallel genealogies is that both the Hittite Great King Tudḫaliya IV and the king of Karkamiš, Ini-Tešub, are both great-grandsons of Šuppiluliuma I. Tudḫaliya IV's grandfather Muršili II was in fact the younger brother of Ini-Tešub's grandfather Šarrukušuḫ. Tudḫaliya IV's lengthier genealogy asserts his descent from the founder of the Hittite New Kingdom and the Hittite empire in Syria and implicitly elevates the position of Muršili II over against that of Šarrukušuḫ. The deft political arrangements that sustained this balance of power between a younger brother who ruled in a position higher than his elder brother is discussed ably by Clelia Mora. See Clelia Mora, “Lo ‘Status del Re di Kargamis,” *Orientalia* 62 (1993): 67-70.

that have taken place in Ugarit (RS 17.352: 4-20; cf. Hittite text RS 17.035: 6-16<sup>197</sup>). The events are conveyed by a series of four verbs in the perfect: *ḥīṭata iḥtaṭû*, they have sinned; *tittadin*, she gave; *tultēlišunūti*, she made them go up (to Cyprus); and *ina berišunu taltakan*, she put (an oath) between them (RS 17.352: 6, 10, 11, 13). This section concludes with the oath Aḥatumilki causes her sons to swear. This portion of the text is framed as her direct speech, “*mā šumma ina warki ūmī . . . iraggumū*, ‘If in the future . . . they should dispute’”(RS 17.352:14, 20). While the oath formula calls for the durative, the controlling verb *taltakan* sets the direct speech of her oath as being pronounced prior to the verdict. The third and final section returns to the temporal frame of the judgment itself and restates the language of her oath in the prohibitive, “*la ira[g gumū]*, they shall not dis[pute]”(RS 17.352: 24). The oath of the queen thus sets the terms of the imperial verdict. Royal and imperial authority function in concert, but it is the queen’s actions—her distribution of the patrimony, her exile of her sons and the oath she causes them to swear—that constitute the resolution of the conflict. The imperial verdict ensures the perpetuity of the terms of her resolution.

The terms that establish the royal and imperial authority upon which this verdict is based appear at first blush to be strikingly different. The basis of imperial authority is stated in the standard prologues of each verdict. Tudḥaliya IV and Ini-Tešub are identified as the male heirs, “the sons of the sons of the sons,” of the sovereigns who

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<sup>197</sup> As stated above, RS 17.035 is broken at the sixteenth line of text, so only the first verb of what must have been a similar sequence remains in line 9, “*ēteṣṣū*, they committed.” The following line begins with Aḥatumilki as the subject and Ḥišmišarruma and IR-Šarruma as the object together with (*qadu*) the list of their property, which is broken at line 16. The most reasonable expectation for the next line would be another verb in the perfect of giving or sending, perhaps *tultēlišunūti*, as in the Karkamiš verdict, RS 17.352: 11.

established Hittite rule in Syria, Šuppiluliuma I and his son Šarrukušuh, king of Karkamiš. The basis of Ugaritic royal authority in this verdict, however, is not stated in patrilineal terms. Aḥatumilki is not identified as the wife or widow of Niqmepa, nor is Ammistamru II identified as the son of Niqmepa or the grandson of Niqmaddu II. Aḥatumilki is identified simply as the queen of Ugarit and the mother of Ḫišmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma. Ammistamru II is identified simply as the king of Ugarit and the brother of Ḫišmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma. The salient terms of royal kinship for the Ugaritic figures are mother, son, and brother. Patrimonial inheritance and dynastic succession may be at stake, but the terms in which these struggles are played out include every relationship but that between father and son or husband and wife. The authorization of patrilineal succession is negotiated in the absence of the father.

Thus the overall structure of this tablet conveys a seamless imperial patrilineage in Karkamiš and Hatti that forms the controlling frame for a rupture of royal relations in Ugarit. This rupture is only put in order by the intervention of the queen mother. She reasserts the succession of Ammistamru II's sons and the sons of his sons over against his brothers, their sons, and the sons of their sons. The imperial authorities reiterate and confirm the reestablished Ugaritic succession in the standard legal litany of the male lineages that will abide by the terms of the verdict: the sons of the sons of Ammistamru II and the sons of the sons of his brothers. This litany echoes the format of the imperial patrilineage with which the verdict opens. At one end, Tudḫaliya IV and Ini-Tešub stand in a single line of imperial succession stretching back to Šuppiluliuma I and Šarrukušuh. At the other, the Ugaritic succession from Ammistamru II to his sons is projected forward



into the future. The point of contact between these two idealized streams of patrilineal authority is a queen who arbitrates the fate of her sons, distributes their inheritance, and ensures the authority of a chosen heir.

In what follows, I analyze the rhetorical mechanisms through which the verdicts establish this patrilineal symmetry and the role of the queen within it. As noted above, legal texts do not simply record or represent political and economic relations; they establish them through the use of highly formulaic language. These formulas communicate the idealization of a patrilineal political structure; yet, in this verdict in particular, the text also necessarily conveys the exigencies and the broader spectrum of royal relationships within which patrilineages are produced. On a more subtle level, the conflict in Ugarit and the agency of Aḥatumilki encoded in the verdict invite a critical reassessment of the internecine conflicts and the role of royal women that are latent in the statements of seamless imperial succession.

The verdicts open with the standard formulation “*ana pāni*, in the presence of” the sovereign who authorizes the verdict.<sup>198</sup> The sovereign is then identified by an assertion of hereditary authority that extends back through the third and fourth generation of previous rulers of Karkamiš and Ḫatti. Ini-Tešub is identified as the son of Šaḫurunuwā and the son of the son of Šarrukušuh.

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<sup>198</sup> Note that this formulation is more common for the king of Karkamiš. Edicts and treaties associated with the Hittite sovereign more frequently open with the formula “*umma RN*, thus says RN,” the form more commonly in standard Akkadian for letters. Márquez Rowe, in noting this fact, muses that “one may wonder whether the Hittite Great King made any distinction at all (between legal and epistolary texts): he decreed and proclaimed, the document was issued, and next it was presented or sent to the vassal king” (Márquez Rowe, “The Legal Texts from Ugarit,” in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*, ed. Wilfred G.E. Watson and Nicolas Wyatt, *Handbuch Der Orientalistik* 39 [Boston: Brill, 1999] 403-404). The fact that the “*ana pāni*” formula also occurs in the verdicts of both kings in the case of Ammistamru’s divorce of the Ammurite princess is noteworthy.

*ana pāni Ini-Tešub šar Karkamiš*  
*mār (DUMU) šaḥurunuwa šar Karkamiš-ma*  
*mār mārīšu (DUMU.DUMU-šu) ša šarru-kušuḥ šar Karkamiš qarrādī*  
(RS 17.352: 2-3)

Tudḫaliya IV is identified as the son of Ḫattušili III, the son of the son of Muršili II, and the son of the son of the son of Šuppiluliuma I.

[a]na pāni [šamši Tudḫaliya . . . ]  
[mā]r ([DUM]U) Ḫattušili šar[ri rabî]  
[m]ār mārīšu ([DU]MU DUMU-šu) ša Murši[li šarri rabî]  
[m]ār mār mārīšu ([DU]MU DUMU DUMU-šu) ša Šupp[iluliuma šarri rabî]  
(RS 17.35: 3-5).

The logogram DUMU (son) dominates the initial lines of both tablets, occurring three times in the first three lines of the Karkamiš verdict and six times in the first five lines of the Hittite verdict. The repetition of the term “son” asserts each ruler as the singular and uncontested heir of a singular and uncontested heir. Furthermore, invoking the names of Šuppiluliuma I and Muršili II evokes the vassal relationships that each established in Ugarit during the reigns of Niqmaddu II and Niqmepa respectively. This formula is not a simple genealogical record but an argument that positions Tudḫaliya IV and Ini-Tešub as the inheritors of an uninterrupted, idealized succession that grants them the authority to arbitrate the case at hand.

While such a presentation of patrilineage is a standard means for asserting imperial or royal legitimacy, in the case of Tudḫaliya IV much was at stake and thus much was omitted in this genealogy. As noted above, the line of succession was not simply from Muršili II to his son Ḫattušili III. Silenced in the interstices of these hereditary claims is the approximately twenty-three year rule of Muršili II’s first heir,

Ḫattušili III's elder brother, Muwattalli II and the short-lived rule of Muwattalli II's heir, Urḫitešub, whom Ḫattušili III deposed. No one involved in the conflict at Ugarit would have been unaware of these omissions. Northern Syria was the theater in which major events of Muwattalli II and Urḫitešub's reigns had played out. Muwattalli II, as Great King, had led the Hittite forces against the armies of Ramesses II at Qadeš, and when Urḫitešub was deposed, he was sent in exile first to Nuḫašši (Apol. section 11, iv 32-3). Aḫatumilki, who was queen of Ugarit through these events and had witnessed Muwattalli II's exile of Bentešina from her homeland Amurru and Ḫattušili III's reinstatement of him as king, would have been cognizant of the political upheavals that stood behind these imperial claims. Furthermore, Tudḫaliya IV's own accession to the throne was a matter of dispute, one in which his own mother, Aḫatumilki's contemporary, the formidable Hittite queen Puduḫepa, likely played a pivotal role.<sup>199</sup>

The internecine struggles and the work of a queen mother to promote her chosen son that are muted in Tudḫaliya IV's statement of patrilineage come to the fore in the verdicts' depictions of events in Ugarit. In juxtaposition to the assertion of an unbroken chain of Hittite imperial authority, the verdicts record the rupture of royal relationships in Ugarit. Ḫišmišarruma and ḪR-Šarruma have committed a crime against their brother

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<sup>199</sup> Ḫattušili III originally designated not Tudḫaliya IV but an elder brother as his successor (*tuhkanti*). See the Bronze Tablet, Bo 86/299, section 14, II, 43: Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 117-118. Klengel argues not only that Puduḫepa's influence was likely behind Tudḫaliya IV's promotion but that Tudḫaliya IV's continued strong association with Puduḫepa once he was king was a product of his gratitude for her intervention on his behalf: "Tuthalijas grosse Wertschätzung seiner Mutter auch zu der Zeit, als er bereits Grosskönig war, könnte vielleicht auch Ausdruck seiner Dankbarkeit dafür sein, dass er ihre Fürsprache bei Hattušili erhielt" (Horst Klengel, "Tuthalija IV. von Ḫatti: Prolegomena zu einer Biographie," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 18 [1991]: 228). This suggestion will be discussed further below.

Ammistamru II, the king, and their mother Aḫatumilku, the queen.<sup>200</sup> The reality of fraternal conflict erupts against the depiction of imperial succession as a line extending between generations of singular heirs. This rupture, which the verdict seeks to mitigate, affords a glimpse of the broad range of figures, beyond father and chosen son, who are involved in the transfer of dynastic power.

*(H)išmišarruma u ʾIR-Šarruma  
ana muḫḫi Aḫatumil[ki ummīšunu]  
u ana muḫḫi Ammistamri [aḫīšunu? ḫīta]  
ēteḫšū*

(H)išmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma  
committed [a crime] against Aḫatumil[ki their mother]  
and against Ammistamru [their brother?].  
(RS 17.035: 6-9)

*Ḫiṣmišarruma u ʾIR-Šarruma  
itti Ammistamru šar Ugarit  
ḫiṭāta iḫtaṭū*

Ḫiṣmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma  
committed a crime against Ammistamru,  
king of Ugarit.  
(RS 17.352: 4-6)

Whatever actions lie behind the term “*ḫiṭāta*,” the use of this term conveys not simply a crisis in but a strategy of the exercise of royal power. The brevity and even the opacity of the statement of fault shifts the focus of the text from the nature of the offense to its consequence, thereby muting whatever damage has been sustained and reasserting

<sup>200</sup> The text of the Hittite verdict, although broken, clearly includes Aḫatumilku along with Ammistamru as the one against whom the brothers have committed an offense. The statement of fault in the Karkamiš verdict includes only Ammistamru as the injured party. The Karkamiš verdict is also less expansive in the description of the inheritance given to the two brothers, giving the impression that this may have been a summary copy of a prior verdict of the Hittite Great King.

regularized succession and royal authority. The balance of the verdict is aimed at delineating and safeguarding an undisputed line of succession from Ammistamru II to his sons. The queen of Ugarit is central to this endeavor.

While the details of the dispute are not disclosed in the laconic statement of fault, the fact that Aḫatumilki, identified as the queen of Ugarit, sends Ḫišmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma out of Ugarit to exile in Alašiya with only their moveable goods as their share of the patrimony (*zīttašunu*) indicates that the royal succession was likely at stake. The lists of what they may take with them include their gold, silver, and household goods (RS 17.352:8) as well as their bronze and their furniture (RS 17.035: 13-14).

*Aḫatumilki ummašunu  
šarrat Ugarit zīttašunu  
ištu kaspī ḫurāši ištu unâtēšunu  
ištu gabba mimmûšunu  
tittadin-ma u ina Alašiya  
tultēlišunūti*

Aḫatumilki their mother,  
queen of Ugarit, gave them their portion of inheritance  
of silver and gold and of their possessions  
of all that was theirs  
and sent them to Cyprus.  
(RS 17.352: 6-11)

*šarrat Ugarit [u Ammistamru?]  
aḫûšunu (Ḫ)išmišarruma u ʾIR-Šarruma  
qadu kaspīšunu ḫurāšiš[unu]  
siparrīšunu eršīšunu  
kussīšunu [paššūrīšunu?]  
imērīšunu immerī[šunu]  
u [q]adu gab[ba mimmûšunu] . . . (tablet broken)*

The queen of Ugarit [and Ammistamru ?]  
their brother, (Ḫ)išmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma

together with their silver, th[eir] gold  
their bronze, their beds,  
their chairs [their tables?]  
their donkeys, their sheep  
and with every[thing else belonging to them] . . .  
(RS 17.035: 10-16)

Any claim to land, residences, or other immoveable property that could have established tenure or income for them or their descendants in Ugarit is absent. The fact that the list of possessions, which the Hittite verdict allows them to take, includes livestock, “*imērišunu immeri[šunu]*” (RS 17.035:15), suggests that prior to their exile they had some kind of claim to, if not ownership of, land that they have now lost. This division of property and the loss of territorial connection to Ugarit constitute both a material and symbolic separation from the royal family, not simply for the brothers but for all their descendants.

Aḫatumilki makes Ḫišmišarruma and ʾIR-Šarruma swear that neither they nor their sons, nor the sons of their sons will make a claim against Ammistamru, his sons, or the sons of his sons concerning this division of their inheritance.

*u ana pāni Ištar-ṣēri māmīta*  
*ina berišunu taltakan*  
*mā šumma ina warki ūmi*  
*Ḫišmišarruma u ʾIR-Šarruma*  
*mārūšunu (DUMU.MEŠ-šu-nu) mārū mārīšunu (DUMU.MEŠ DUMU.MEŠ-šu-*  
*nu)*  
*aššum zītīšunu*  
*ana muḫḫi Ammistamru šar Ugarit*  
*u ana muḫḫi mārīš[u] (DUMU.MEŠ-š[u]) [mārī] mārīšu ([DUMU.MEŠ]*  
*DUMU.MEŠ-šu)*  
*iraggumū.*

Before Ištar of the Steppe  
she made them swear an oath,

“In the future Țiřmiřarruma and ȚR-řarruma  
their sons or the sons of their sons  
(may not) bring a suit concerning their inheritance  
against Ammistamru, king of Ugarit,  
or against his sons or the sons of his sons.”  
(RS 17.352: 14-20).

Just as Țiřmiřarruma and ȚR-řarruma’s material share of the patrimony has been divided and disbursed, so too their line of male descendants is separated from Ammistamru II’s line of male descendants. This separation of descent is manifested in the parallel chains of the standard formula “their sons or the sons of their sons, *mārūřunu mārū mārīřunu*” and “his sons or the sons of his sons, *mārīřu mārī mārīřu*.” While the use of this formula is standard in legal disputes between two parties, what is significant here is that the two parties are brothers, the sons of Niqmepa and Ařatumilki. The lineages encoded in these chains of logographs represent the splitting of a single royal patrilineage in the demarcation between the future sons of the sons of a king.

The dual delineation of material inheritance and descent means that Țiřmiřarruma, ȚR-řarruma, and their heirs will have no share in or claim to any future wealth that will accrue to the royal family in Ugarit in the future or any stake in its ongoing political power. The concluding line of the verdict states, “*iřtu ūmi annî zēzū bařrū*”(RS 17.352: 26-27). These final two enigmatic verbal adjectives, *zēzū* and *bařrū*, have inspired linguistic discussion, but the force of the statement is that, “from this day forward,” from the moment in which the tablet is inscribed, Țiřmiřarruma and ȚR-řarruma have been cut off.<sup>201</sup> Their separation from the royal family is geographical,

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<sup>201</sup> Sylvie Lackenbacher, *Textes Akkadiens d’Ugarit : Textes Provenant Des Vingt-Cinq Premières Campagnes*, *Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient*, 20 (Paris: Cerf, 2002) 108, n. 331; Eugen J. Pentiuc,

material, and genealogical as the brothers are sent to Cyprus, they are denied any claim to land or property in Ugarit, and their male descendants are forever forbidden from making any claims on the royal family. The remarkable aspect of this separation is that the queen mother puts it into effect. She acts as both the political and the genealogical pivot among the former king, her husband Niqmepa, their sons, and the designated future kings of Ugarit. Having outlived her husband she becomes the link between the previous royal order and the ones to come. This is true not simply for the Ugaritic succession but arguably for the larger imperial context. Her tenure in Ugarit predated the political positions held by all the parties in this case, including the imperial sovereigns. The Hittite king Tudḫaliya IV asserts his authority as the heir of Ḫattušili III, but Aḫatumilki was already queen in Ugarit before Ḫattušili III came to power.

While the subordinate position of the royal family of Ugarit in relation to the Hittite powers meant that even given her long tenure as queen, Aḫatumilki would not have possessed any official power or prerogatives vis-à-vis the son of her Hittite contemporaries, yet in her person she would at least have embodied a connection to or functioned as survival of the vestiges of the former political order. This implicit status may undergird the manner in which her intervention is depicted in the imperial verdict.

As noted above, the series of verbs in the perfect indicates that her actions with regard to

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*West Semitic Vocabulary in the Akkadian Texts from Emar*, Harvard Semitics Studies 49 (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2001) 34-35; Pentiuc, "West Semitic Terms in Akkadian Texts from Emar," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 58 (1999): 84; Daniel Arnaud, "Le Vocabulaire de l'Héritage dans les Textes Syriens du Moyen-Euphrate à la Fin de l'âge du Bronze Récent," *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici sul Vicino Oriente Antico* 12 (1995): 25, n. 28. Pentiuc reads the final verb as *ba-az-ru* and as related to a West Semitic root attested in Hebrew as *bāzar*, Aramaic *bēdar*, and Syriac *bdar*, "to scatter" referring to the distribution of patrimony (Pentiuc 2001: 35). One might say in this context, the action of "scattering" which figures symbolically in the act of distribution takes on a literal sense in as much as this distribution happens along with a physical exile.



her sons took place before the case came before the Hittite authorities. She gave Ḫišmišarruma and ʾIR-Šaruma their portion of the patrimony (*zīttašunu tittadin-ma*), made them go up to Cyprus (*tultēlišunūti*), and made them swear an oath (*māmīta ina berišunu taltakan*) before the goddess Ištar never to make a claim against Ammistamru II or his heirs. The phrasing of this final action, the swearing of the oath, echoes the larger structure of the imperial verdict in which it is set.

The verdict opens with the formula, “*ana pāni*/ in the presence of” and concludes with the prohibition against Ḫišmišarruma, ʾIR-Šarruma, and their heirs from making a claim against Ammistamru II and his heirs. The swearing of the oath is introduced with the phrase “*ana pāni Ištar Šēri*/ in the presence of Ištar of the plain” and closes with Aḫatumilki’s injunction against her sons Ḫišmišarruma, ʾIR-Šarruma, and their heirs making a claim against Ammistamru II and his heirs. These two “*ana pāni*” phrases position one act of arbitration inside the other in a mirror framework.

*ana pāni Ini-Tešub šar Karkamiš*  
*mār (DUMU) šaḫurunuwa šar Karkamiš-ma*  
*mār mārīšu (DUMU.DUMU-šu) ša šarru-kušuḫ šar Karkamiš qarrādī*  
 (RS 17.352: 2-3)

*u ana pāni Ištar-šēri māmīta*  
*ina berišunu taltakan*  
*mā šumma ina warki ūmi*  
*Ḫišmišarruma u ʾIR-Šarruma*  
*mārūšunu (DUMU.MEŠ-šu-nu) mārū mārīšunu (DUMU.MEŠ DUMU.MEŠ-šu-nu)*  
*aššum zītīšunu*  
*ana muḫḫi Ammistamru šar Ugarit*  
*u ana muḫḫi mārīš[u] (DUMU.MEŠ-š[u]) [mārī] mārīšu ([DUMU.MEŠ]*  
*DUMU.MEŠ-šu)*

*iraggumū . . .*  
(RS 17.352:14-20)

[*urra šēra*] *Ḫišmišarruma*  
*u ḪR-Šarruma* [*mārūšu* (DUMU.MEŠ-šu)] *mārū mārīšu* (DUMU.MEŠ  
DUMU.MEŠ-šu)  
*aššum zītīš[unu ana muḫḫi] Ammistamru šar*  
*šar*<sup>202</sup> *Ugarit* [*u ana mu*] *ḫḫi mārīšu* (DUMU.MEŠ-šu) *mārī mārīšu* (DUMU.MEŠ  
DUMU.MEŠ-šu)  
*lā ira*[*ggumū . . .*  
*šumma irag*[*gumū*] *tuppu annû*  
*ile*»*ē[šunû]ti ištu ūmi annî*  
*zēzû baṣrû*  
(RS 17.352: 20-27)

The initial arbitration is the one set at the center of the text, in which the queen Aḫatumilki distributes the patrimony, exiles her sons, and makes them swear to abide by her judgment by invoking the deity. The subsequent imperial arbitration, which frames Aḫatumilki's oath, validates and inscribes her actions under the auspices of the authorities in Ḫatti and Karkamiš. Not only does the syntax of the verdict indicate that her resolution of the case is temporally prior to the verdict, but the mirror framework created by the inset passages introduced by “*ana pāni*” and closing with the delineation of the Ugarit royal lineage suggests that the queen's exercise of authority is in some sense parallel to, or at least represented on the model of, the Hittite authorities. The resolution in the first instance is authorized by the queen's invocation of the deity and second by the invocation of imperial power.

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<sup>202</sup> The repetition of *šar* here is a scribal plus, see PRU IV: 122.

While Aḫatumilki's role in arbitrating events in Ugarit depicted in this verdict has led interpreters to see the case as the example of a queen functioning as a regent,<sup>203</sup> the argument here is that this depiction is remarkable only in that it brings to the fore political relationships that also inhered within the imperial contexts. Both Ini-Tešub and Tudḫaliya IV's mothers were active in resolving or arbitrating legal disputes during their sons' reigns. Although the lack of excavation of the Late Bronze Age levels at Karkamiš leaves little internal evidence to reconstruct its dynastic history, a legal text from Emar, a Syrian commercial center that was directly subordinate to local Hittite authorities, attests to the intervention of Ini-Tešub's mother in a financial dispute that was brought before the Hittite authorities in Karkamiš.<sup>204</sup> While this verdict opens with the standard preface, “*ana pāni Ini-Tešub*,” the king's mother drives the resolution of the conflict between the litigants and initiates a transfer of land in recompense for a disputed sum of silver.<sup>205</sup> Ini-Tešub's mother is identified by the term AMA.LUGAL and a proper name <sup>fd</sup>U-IR-*mi* (MFA 1977.114: 12, 16). A salient feature of this case, and perhaps a reason for imperial intervention, is that while the litigant is identified simply by his name and patronymic,

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<sup>203</sup> As Nougayrol famously put it, Ammistamru II was “un prince encore enfant que sa mère dut longtemps défendre” (PRU IV: 120).

<sup>204</sup> David I. Owen, “Pasūri-Dagan and Ini-Teššup's Mother,” in *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield*. Ziony Zevit, Seymour Gitin, and Michael Sokoloff, eds., (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1995) 573-584. Emar, like Ugarit, was under the jurisdiction of Karkamiš, but the city itself was controlled directly by Hittite officials. See Yoram Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars of the City of Emar in the Late Bronze Age*, Harvard Semitic Series 59 (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2009) 16 and Gary Beckman, “Hittite Administration in Syria in Light of the Texts from Ḫattuša, Ugarit and Emar,” *New Horizons in the Study of Ancient Syria*, Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 25, Mark W. Chavalas and John L. Hayes, eds (Malibu, California: Undena Publications, 1992) 47-49.

<sup>205</sup> The litigant Pasūri-Dagan, son of Akallina, states that he had seized 45 shekels which Ari-Teššup, of Aššur, has withheld from him, but the king's mother subsequently took it away from him, promising to return it. She then, in place of the silver, gave Pasūri-Dagan a field in another town (MFA 1977.114: 12-29).

Pasūri-Dagan, son of Akallina, and is thus presumably a resident of Emar, the other is identified as a “man of Aššur, <sup>LÚ.KUR</sup>*aš-šur*”(MFA 1977.114: 5).<sup>206</sup> In a comparable scenario, during the reign of Ammistamru II, Tudḫaliya IV’s mother, the Hittite queen Puduḫepa,<sup>207</sup> mediated a dispute which a citizen of Ugarit brought before the Hittite authorities concerning reparation for his boat that was sunk by a defendant, identified only by his proper name, Sukku (RS 17.133).<sup>208</sup> Although the letter to Ammistamru II in which her judgment is given opens with the standard phrase indicating the words of the Hittite Great King, “*umma šamši*,” the tablet is imprinted with Puduḫepa’s personal imperial seal, inscribed with the legend “[*kunuk*] *Puduḫepa šarrati rabīti š[arrat (?)*.”<sup>209</sup> Here again we see a queen interceding as a representative of imperial authority.

Not only were there precedents for queen mothers involved in litigation within the broader, imperial context during this period, but the close association between a powerful queen and her son the reigning king was not limited to the relationship between Aḫatumilki and her son Ammistamru II. Indeed on the very legal verdict that is the focus of the remainder of this chapter, RS 17.159, the imperial seal of Tudḫaliya IV attests to

<sup>206</sup> Cohen notes that as an important trading center on caravan routes since the Old Babylonian period, Emar “hosted within its walls representatives of different nationalities coming from, among others, the Land of Suḫu, North Babylonia, and Assyria”(Cohen, *The Scribes and Scholars of the City of Emar*, 16). Given the threat that Assyria posed to Hittite rule in the region after the break up of Mittanni, it is conceivable that a conflict involving a “man of Aššur” might be one to be handled with care.

<sup>207</sup> See M. Darga, “Puduḫepa: an Anatolian Queen of the 13th Century B.C.,” *Mansel’e Armagan, Me’langes Mansel* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1974: 939-61 and H. Otten, *Puduḫepa: Eine Hethitische Königin in ihren Textzeugnissen*, Jahrgang 1975, 1 (Mainz: Franz Steiner, 1975).

<sup>208</sup> PRU IV: 118. Nougayrol suggested that since the tablet was Hittite it would have been natural for Sukku not to be identified by his country or origin, if he himself were also Hittite. Like the case in Emar, this dispute would then also be one between men of differing polities, a case in which, as suggested above in n.23, local arbitration would likely either not have been sufficient or presented potential political risks.

<sup>209</sup> PRU IV: 115. Ug III: 13, fig. 16; 18, fig. 23; 109.

his own close association with his mother and the importance of her position as queen. While much of the legend is missing, Puduḥepa's name is clearly inscribed as part of Tudḫaliya IV's claim to kingship.<sup>210</sup> Moreover, as we shall see in this next set of verdicts, Ammistamru II anticipated that his own wife and son would politically collaborate after or even before his death, just as he did with his mother Aḫatumilki. The driving concern of RS 17.159 is not so much to establish the divorce between Ammistamru II and the "daughter of Bentešina" but to prohibit her son, the heir, Utrišarruma, from reinstating her as queen. While RS 17.035 and RS 17.352 attest to Aḫatumilki's exercise of power on behalf of and alongside of her son Ammistamru II, the second set of verdicts we will discuss, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, reveal Ammistamru II's anxieties about his wife's exercise of power as queen after his death.

#### **"IF HE SAYS, I SHALL FOLLOW MY MOTHER": THE UNMAKING OF A QUEEN**

The same rulers of Hatti, Karkamiš, and Ugarit converged again later in the reign of Ammistamru II to arbitrate the terms of Ammistamru II's divorce from his wife, the daughter of Bentešina, king of Amurru, and to determine the Ugaritic succession in the wake of this divorce. While the imperial authorities were the same as in the previous verdicts, the status of the royal women involved and the political stakes of the conflict

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<sup>210</sup> PRU IV: 115. Nougayrol reconstructs the signs as, "[<sup>na4</sup>KISHIB <sup>1</sup>tu-ud-ḫa-li-ia LUGAL GAL <sup>kur</sup>ḫa-at-ti UR.SAG DUMU <sup>1</sup>ḫa-at-tu-ši-li LU]GAL GAL UR.[SAG] à <sup>1</sup>pu-du-ḫ[é-pa MUNUS.LUGAL GAL MUNUS.LUGAL] <sup>kur</sup>ḫa-at-ti DUMU DUMU-šu ša <sup>1</sup>mur-ši-li LUGAL.GAL qar-ra-a-di." See also Ug III: 111; 19-21, fig. 24-26; pl. III-IV.

could not have been more different. Disputes concerning the divorce continued well beyond these initial verdicts and engendered at least ten surviving verdicts involving the kings of Ugarit, Amurru, and Hatti.<sup>211</sup> Half of these verdicts are imperial decrees from Hatti or Karkamiš and half are accords between Ammistamru II and his former brother-in-law Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru. These later texts will be dealt with in the following chapter. Here only the two initial imperial verdicts will be considered as they bear on the king's anxieties about collaboration between his wife and son in the wake of his death.

These two initial verdicts are a lengthy decree authorized by Tudḫaliya IV of Ḫatti (RS 17.159) and a shorter complementary decree authorized by Ini-Tešub of Karkamiš (RS 17.396). The Hittite verdict testifies to Ammistamru II's marriage to a daughter of Bentešina, certifies her divorce and exile, and dictates the consequences of the divorce in terms of her property and her relationship to her son, Ammistamru II's heir. When she leaves Ugarit she may take all the goods that she brought with her from Amurru, but she loses all claim on or relationship to her royal children. The Karkamiš verdict, on the other hand, is concerned only with the property that she acquired while in Ugarit. The decree stipulates that all the property she acquired in Ugarit belongs to Ammistamru. Both texts identify the woman only as "the daughter of Bentešina." The most distinctive feature of these two verdicts, in contrast to the later verdicts, is that although she is unnamed, the royal woman herself is party to the arbitration. Towards her alone are directed the admonitions not to contest the decision recorded in the tablets.

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<sup>211</sup> In addition to the texts from the Southern Archive noted above—RS 17.159 RS, 17.396, RS 17.348, RS 18.06-17.365, RS 17.082, RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A-17.360A, RS 17.318-17.349A—are RS 16.270 from the Central Archive and RS 1957.1, which is unprovenanced.

In all the subsequent texts which concern the divorce, the agreements are purely between men: her husband the king of Ugarit, her brother the king of Amurru, and her other royal brothers. These first verdicts are concerned with the status of the woman in Ugarit as queen and royal mother, a status that Ammistamru II fears that she might reclaim after his death. What is at stake in these texts is ultimately not the relationship between Ugarit and Amurru but the constellation of power within Ugarit.

Cord Kühne has persuasively argued that the woman is identified as “the daughter of Bentešina” because the texts concern the original property arrangements of the marriage, arrangements that Bentešina, king of Amurru, would have negotiated.<sup>212</sup> I argue further that the term “daughter” in the appellation “daughter of Bentešina” is equally significant. When the marriage arrangements were made, her most salient identity was being her father’s daughter. As with any woman given in a diplomatic marriage, she came to Ugarit as an extension of her father’s status and a means of forging a political alliance between the elites of Amurru and Ugarit. To designate her as the daughter of Bentešina was thus to return her to her initial affiliation with Amurru, moving her backward in time to a point before she had acquired property or political position in Ugarit. Together, these verdicts function as a reverse dowry, as they send the woman back to her country with only the goods she brought with her. Identifying her simply as a daughter of a foreign king is a crucial part of the repudiation of her as queen, wife, and mother in Ugarit.

This repudiation becomes overt in the text arbitrated by the Hittite Great King, RS 17.159. While the division of property is the first stipulation, the overwhelming concern

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<sup>212</sup> Kühne, “Ammistamru Und Die Tochter Der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 178-9.

of the verdict is the relationship between the exiled queen and her son, Ammistamru II's heir, Utrišarruma. The clause concerning Utrišarruma constitutes twenty of the total fifty lines of the verdict. These lines decree that if Utrišarruma follows his mother back to Amurru, he will forfeit his inheritance and position as crown prince and Ammistamru II will designate another son as his successor. Furthermore, even if Utrišarruma chooses to remain in Ugarit, if he tries to bring his mother back and restore her as queen in Ugarit after the death of his father, he will forfeit his inheritance and right to rule. In this case, the Hittite sovereign will intervene and install another son of Ammistamru II as king. As if these prohibitions were not enough, the verdict goes further and forbids the "daughter of Bentešina" from appealing to her other sons, daughters, or sons-in-law. Through the divorce she has lost all status in Ugarit, not simply as queen and wife of the king but as a royal mother.

Ammistamru II's anxiety about the constellation of authority in Ugarit after his death is profound enough to make intervention by the Hittites more desirable than the return of the former queen. The high stakes set for the consequences of Utrišarruma's allegiance to his mother indicate that such a choice was not only possible but represented enough of a danger to require such a penalty. The prohibitions in the text indicate at least two major assumptions. First, the prohibitions assume that a royal woman could claim power or be given power by virtue of her relationship to her son, even in the case of exile. Second, the extreme nature of the prohibitions indicates that reinstating his mother as queen could be desirable to a royal son. Indeed, the verdict indicates that in this case the reciprocal benefit to mother and son of their political collaboration was great enough to



require the threat of the total loss of the son's position as king to prevent it. Ammistamru II's concern is ultimately not so much who will be king in Ugarit after his death but who will be queen.

In what follows we will see how the language of the text both records and enacts a reconfiguration of power in which a royal woman loses her position as queen and her expected relations with her son, the royal heir. Like all legal texts in this tradition, these verdicts are inscribed with the conviction that written words have efficacy to enforce economic, political, and familial relationships and that they continue to exercise this authority beyond the lifetimes of the parties involved at the moment of their inscription. Naming and not naming in this context have tremendous significance. As we have seen, in the case of imperial or royal figures, the repetition of name, title and patrilineage is the primary basis upon which the authority of the legal text itself is established. The woman mentioned only as "the daughter of Bentešina" is the primary party to a legal suit in which all the other parties are identified by name and title. Although the verdict indicates that she held the office of queen, was the wife of Ammistamru II, and is the mother of Utrišarruma the crown prince, she is never identified by name or by any formal title linking her to a position in Ugarit. The terms by which the woman is identified in the text do as much to define her status as the legal injunctions themselves.

The Hittite verdict RS 17.159 is a tablet of 50 lines, impressed at the center with the bilingual seal of Tudḫaliya IV, and prefaced only with the major titles of the Hittite king, "*šamši, Tudḫaliya, šarri rabî, šar Ḫatti*; His majesty (My Sun), Tudḫaliya, Great King, king of Ḫatti" (RS 17.159: 1-3), not with his full filiation as the son of Ḫattušili III,

grandson of Muršili II, and great grandson of Šuppiluliuma I. The main text begins with a series of statements that establish the events in Ugarit that have set this case in motion (lines 3-11). Three clauses follow dictating the consequences of the divorce to the former queen and her children. First, she must leave the house of Ammistamru, taking only what she brought with her from Amurru (lines 12-21). The second, and by far the longest clause, concerns the position of her son as crown prince and his relationship to her. If he follows his mother to Amurru he will lose his inheritance and position in Ugarit. If he remains in Ugarit but attempts to reinstate his mother as queen in Ugarit after his father's death, he will also lose his position and inheritance (lines 22-42). The final clause prevents the former queen from appealing in the future to any of her other sons, daughters, or sons-in-laws (lines 43-50).

Like the verdicts concerning the exile of Ammistamru II's brothers discussed above, a sequence of verbs in the perfect tense introduces the series of events in Ugarit that led to the case being brought before the Hittite authorities.<sup>213</sup> Ammistamru II took the daughter of Bentešina as a wife (*ana aššuttīšu ilteqe*); she attempted to harm him (*maruṣ qaqqadīšu ubta'i*); and he irrevocably divorced her (*ētezibši adi dārāti*) RS 17.159: 5-11. This trajectory of offense and expulsion from the royal family, all stated at the outset of the verdict, parallels the sequence of statements in the previous case, in RS 17.352: 6-13. Ammistamru II's brothers committed a crime (*hīṭata iḥtaṭū*). Their mother Aḥatumilki

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<sup>213</sup> C.f. Reuven Yaron, "A Royal Divorce at Ugarit," *Orientalia NS* (1963): 55. Concerning the phrasing of the verdict Yaron also notes, "The reference is to a past event, even though from the following clause we learn that the divorcee had not yet departed from the house of her husband. In spite of the fact that text 17.159 issues from the great-king, the divorce itself is the act of Ammistamru."

gave them the moveable goods constituting their portion of inheritance (*zīttašunu . . . tittadin-ma*). She exiled them to Cyprus (*ina Alašiya tultēlišunūti*), and she made them swear an oath that neither they nor their male descendants would make a claim concerning their inheritance in the future (*māmīta ina berīšunu taltakan*). In both cases immediate action to punish an offense within the royal family is taken prior to the intervention of the Hittite authorities. In the case of the woman the signal of expulsion from the royal family is divorce; in the case of the men, it is exile and the apportioning of a limited inheritance.

Nonetheless, a closer reading of the verdicts indicates that the authority by which the ultimate consequences of expulsion from the royal family are dictated differs in each case. In the case of the brothers of Ammistamru II, the full sequence of punishment, stated in the perfect tense, is meted out by Aḫatumilki, not by the imperial authorities in Karkamiš. She gives them their portion of inheritance, she exiles them to Cyprus, she makes them swear an oath not to sue concerning the portion they have received in the future. The authority of the king of Karkamiš is brought to bear simply in enforcing this oath and the prohibition against further legal action Aḫatumilki has already invoked. On the other hand, in the latter case, the initial statements in the perfect that establish the marriage, crime, and divorce of Ammistamru II's wife are followed by a series of precatives that dictate the consequences: in the first clause, "let her take, *lilqēma*" (RS 17.159: 16), "let her go away, *littalak*" (18), "let them swear an oath, *litmûma*" (20), and "let him restore it to them, *lišallimšunūti*" (21); in the second, "let him put, *liškun*" (26), "let him go away, *littalak*" (27), "let him put, *liškun*" (38), and "let him go, *lillik*" (139);

and in the third, the standard final prohibitive of legal verdict, “she shall not bring a suit, *lā iraggum*” (47). These injunctions represent the performative dimension of the tablet. What is inscribed is thereby commanded. As these injunctions are inscribed under the auspices of Tudḫaliya IV, they represent the actions that are the Hittite sovereign’s to command.

Rather than a queen acting alongside her son the ruling king and exiling her other sons, in this case the ruling king acts in collaboration with the Hittite sovereign to exile a queen and prohibit her from contact with her son, the future king. While in both cases the imperial authorities must ultimately authorize the crossing of boundaries and the configuration of a vassal dynasty, the fact that the latter case involves the status of an Amurrite princess and her son makes the consequences of her expulsion from the Ugaritic royal family an international affair. Although the divorce has already been stipulated, at the point of the verdict the “daughter of Bentešina” is still in transition in terms of her status, property, and context.<sup>214</sup> She is poised between Ugarit and Amurru, both physically and politically. Her transfer from Amurru to Ugarit in marriage constituted an interdynastic political alliance, so her displacement from Ugarit by divorce requires imperial intervention to ensure that the alliance is not compromised.

The opening statement of the text rehearses her initial movement from Amurru to Ugarit: “Ammistamru II, king of Ugarit has taken the daughter of Bentešina as a wife, *Ammistamru šar Ugarit mārat Bentešina šar Amurru ana aššuttīšu ilteqe*”(RS 17.159: 3-

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<sup>214</sup> The fact that the two verdicts stipulate the two directions of the flow of property, what she may take with her and what she must leave behind, suggest that she may not even yet have left Ugarit.

6). This statement is not simply a rehearsal of events; it frames and positions these events. She is not identified by name or by title. The major party to this case, the wife of the king and the mother of the royal heir, is introduced in no other terms than those that defined her at the point of marriage. While the use of *ana aššutti*, literally, “in the capacity or office of wife,” is a standard expression for marriage, the fact that she is not anywhere referred to as his wife but only here as a daughter of another man who had been brought into the household in the capacity of wife intensifies the sense that she has been removed from a position. In the statement of divorce in the lines that follow she is still referred to as the daughter of Bentešina, not as the queen of Ugarit or wife of Ammistamru II: “Ammistamru has irrevocably divorced the daughter of Bentešina, *Ammistamru šar Ugarit m̄arat Bentešina ētezibši adi dārâtī*”(RS 17.159: 8-11). Although later segments of this verdict and the verdict from the court of Karkamiš indicate that the divorced queen had wealth, position, and children in Ugarit, the repetition of this appellation “daughter of Bentešina” suggests that on a fundamental level she never stopped being the daughter of a foreign king. At the moment of her divorce she is identified in the same terms as she was before the marriage took place.

The consequences of her divorce, like the consequences of the exile of Ammistamru II's brothers, reveal the material and symbolic links between familial relations, property, and land. These links that emerge in the stipulations of the verdicts evoke David Schloen's concept of the patrimonial household as a material reality and a political model. When Ammistamru's brothers leave Ugarit for Alašiya, they take only moveable goods as their inheritance. They retain no territorial claim in Ugarit.

Furthermore the legal rhetoric, which forbids the male descendants of Ȧišmišarruma and IŘ-Šarruma from bringing any further suit against Ammistamru II's male descendants, indicates that this division in inheritance is final. They have been cut off from the patrimonial line. Their sons and the sons of their sons may bring no claim against the sons of Ammistamru II. In their exile his brothers are removed both physically and politically from the royal household. In the case of the "daughter of Bentešina," the conflation of property and family status is explicit. The first set of precatives, indicating the Hittite imperial imperatives, states, "anything belonging to the daughter of Bentešina which she brought into the house of Ammistamru, let her take it and go away from the [house] of Ammistamru, *u mīnummê ša mārāt Bentešina ša ina bīti Ammistamru ultēribu lilqēma ištu [bīti] Ammistamru littalak* (RS 17.159: 12-18). The "house of Ammistamru" not simply the material location of royal property and wealth; it is the set of relationships and shared political power that constitutes the structure of dynastic rule. The fact that she may only take what she brought into the household is a material expression of her loss of position in the Ugaritic royal family and her stake in its fortunes. Her wealth and status is reduced to only what connects her back to the royal family of Amurru. The parameters of two spheres of patrimonial royal authority were made explicit by the passing of a royal woman between them.

The Karkamiš verdict makes explicit what the daughter of Bentešina has lost in being expelled from the Ugaritic royal family. The text is less than half the length of the Hittite verdict, comprising just 19 lines, and is impressed with the cylinder seal of Ini-

Tešub, king of Karkamiš. His verdict concerns solely the wealth she must surrender to Ammistamru II. Again, she is positioned repeatedly as the “daughter of Bentešina.”

*mīnummê mārat Bentešina šar Amurri  
lū kaspu lū ḥurāšu lū erû  
lū unūt siparri lū tāmartu  
lū qīštu lū ṭātu lū a[rdu] lū amtu  
lū šubātu lū kitû ša ina libbi Ugarit  
mārat Bentešina šar Amurru ēpušu  
[g]abba ana Ammistamri šar Ugarit  
irtīhū*

Everything [belonging to] the daughter of Bentešina, king of Amurru  
whether silver, gold, or copper  
or bronze object or tribute  
or ceremonial gift or voluntary gift or male slave or female slave  
or garment or linen which in Ugarit  
the daughter of Bentešina king of Amurru acquired--  
all belong to Ammistamru, king of Ugarit  
(RS 17.396: 5-12)

The key phrase that communicates the argument of this verdict is “*ša ina libbi Ugarit mārat Bentešina šar Amurru ēpušu*,” which in Ugarit the daughter of Bentešina, king of Amurru, acquired” (11-12). The political and geographic marker “*ša ina libbi Ugarit*” is juxtaposed against “*Bentešina šar Amurru*.” Linking them as subject is simply the identification “daughter,” which is dependent upon the status of a foreign king for significance. The opulent list of human and material is thus framed not as wealth the woman accumulated by virtue of being queen of Ugarit, but as goods proper to Ugarit that the representative of a foreign king has acquired. The identification of the foreign king, “*Bentešina šar Amurru*,” is matched by the concluding “*Ammistamri šar Ugarit*.” This parallel formation and the repetition of Ugarit from “*ša ina libbi Ugarit*” to “*šar Ugarit*” enforce the claim that what was acquired in Ugarit belongs to the king of Ugarit.

While Ammistamru II claims this wealth, significant items in this list convey the fact that “the daughter of the king of Amurru” acquired it not as a foreign princess but by virtue of her position as queen of Ugarit. Silver, gold, copper, bronze, garments, and linen are all signs of wealth and prestige that might be claimed by any sufficiently powerful member of the elite or of the royal household. Both the abbreviated list of the inheritance that Ammistamru II’s brothers are given when they are exiled to Cyprus, which is found in the Karkamiš verdict, and the more extensive list in the Hittite verdict include silver and gold as the first items. In the Karkamiš verdict, silver and gold, along with the general term *unâtēšunu*, “their household goods,” are the sole terms used to indicate their inheritance. Although the Hittite list of the brothers’ inheritance is more extensive than the Karkamiš verdict, including bronze as well as silver and gold, in addition to furnishings and live stock, the list does not include the specialized terms *tāmartu*, *qīštu*, or *ṭātu* which are numbered among the goods that the daughter of Bentešina acquired. These three terms refer not to the substance of the goods--silver, gold, or copper-- but to the means and context in which they were acquired. They communicate a political significance beyond the material value of these goods.

The first item, *tāmartu*, “tribute,” from the verb *amārum*, “to see,” carries the additional meaning of “spectacle” in the sense of a public display of royal power, and when used in the sense of “gift” or “tribute,” it connotes a public dimension to the offering.<sup>215</sup> The use of this term indicates that she held a publicly recognized position within the Ugaritic court. The term *qīštu*, “ceremonial gift,” has several levels of meaning

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<sup>215</sup> *The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. 18, T (2006): 111-114



including a votive offering to a god, gratuity, honorarium, and fee.<sup>216</sup> In each of these senses, the significance of *qīštu* resides not simply the material value of the gift but in its symbolic power to mark relationships, thus the term is used in the context of the ceremonial exchanges between kings in the Amarna letters (EA 29:83, 22:43, 21:27, 288:22, 53:51). The use of these specialized terms, particularly *qīštu*, indicates her royal position and the elite network of relationships in which she had been enmeshed by virtue of this position. The final term *ṭātu*, “voluntary gift” or “gratuity, bribe,” indicates a present not stipulated but given at the initiation of the giver, in an effort to secure a benefit from someone functioning in an official capacity.<sup>217</sup> The use of the term suggests that the daughter of Bentešina would have had sufficient authority to make this kind of gift profitable to the giver. Together, all three of these terms indicate that what she has lost is the power to retain the offerings she once commanded by virtue of her position within the political system supported by such specialized modes of exchange.

The traces of the daughter of Bentešina’s relationships with other royal figures, elites, and subordinates in Ugarit encoded in the terms *tāmartu*, *qīštu*, and *ṭātu* offer a glimpse of the position this royal woman held in the “house of Ammistamru.” Marian Feldman’s analysis of the function the exchange of luxury goods in Late Bronze Age diplomacy, discussed in the introduction, is apropos. Luxury objects are not intrinsically *tāmartu*, *qīštu*, and *ṭātu*; they become assigned to these categories because of the social contexts in which they are situated and which they reinforce. Feldman argues that “an

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<sup>216</sup> *The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. 13, Q (1982): 278-9.

<sup>217</sup> *The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. 19, Ṭ (2006): 63-66.

object's significance, which can also be considered its power or efficacy, derives from its placement within a field of expectations. The objects exert their force by enmeshing the human actors in relationships as possessors, sender and receivers."<sup>218</sup> The marriage of Bentešina's daughter to Ammistamru II constituted an elite exchange between the kings of Ugarit and Amurru, an exchange of the woman herself as well as the items of value she brought with her. Yet, once in her position within Ugarit, she became not simply a mediating object between two kings, but an actor in this network of elite exchange, one who received luxury items indicative of a range of political relationships. To cede these items to Ammistamru II, by order of the king of Karkamiš, was to surrender her status as a representative of the Ugaritic royal family within the international system and within Ugarit itself.

The constellation of imperial and interdynastic relationships that the daughter of Bentešina embodied made it particularly necessary that this stripping of her status happen within the context of an imperial court. The political significance of her lineage as the daughter of Bentešina lay in her father's long history of protection by and loyalty to the Hittite Great King, Ḫattušili III, discussed above. When Ḫattušili III deposed his brother's heir Urḫitešub and took control of Hatti, he reinstated Bentešina in Amurru and designated his daughter Gaššuliyawiya as Bentešina's wife and reigning queen. The marriage between Gaššuliyawiya and Bentešina was intended to secure the primacy of a Hittite royal line within Amurru. In Ḫattušili III's declaration in their treaty that

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<sup>218</sup> Feldman, *Diplomacy by Design*, 114. Feldman notes here Nicholas Thomas's foreward to Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998) viii.

Gaššuliyawiya "possesses queenship [in the land] of Amurru" and "the son and grandson of my daughter shall [exercise] kingship in the land of Amurru," we see again the reciprocal relation of royal mothers and sons (CTH 92).<sup>219</sup> Gaššuliyawiya's "queenship" in Amurru is passed on to her sons as "kingship." In this case, the purpose of the reciprocal relation between royal mother and son is to maintain Hittite presence within the royal house of Amurru.<sup>220</sup> The title, "daughter of the Great Lady," by which the daughter of Bentešina is identified in subsequent verdicts indicates that she was the offspring of this vassal marriage between Bentešina and Ḫattušili's daughter, the "Great Lady," Gaššuliyawiya.<sup>221</sup> Thus, the identification of Ammistamru II's wife as "the daughter of Bentešina" in this text was freighted with greater significance than simply that she was the daughter of a foreign king. Both her father's special relationship to the Hittite Great King and her Hittite mother Gaššuliyawiya's primacy as queen and mother

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<sup>219</sup> Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 101.

<sup>220</sup> The verdicts concerning the divorce of the daughter of Bentešina offer a glimpse of how this privileged status of Ḫattušili's descendants played out within Amurru in the succeeding generation, as shall be seen in the appearance of the "sons of the Great Lady" in texts which will be discussed in the following chapter.

<sup>221</sup> The discovery of RS 1957.1 confirmed the possibility Nougayrol himself tentatively raised when the texts were published that the "daughter of Bentešina" might be "daughter of the Great Lady" referred to in subsequent divorce arbitrations and that these verdicts constituted a single collection, not two successive divorces of two different Amurrite princesses (PRU IV: 131). Nougayrol writes in his review of Fisher's publication of RS 1957.1, "Je n'ai jamais douté, pour ma part, que la "fille de la Grand-dame" fût aussi fille de Bentešina, donc soeur de Šaušgamuwa," Jean Nougayrol, "L.R. Fisher, the Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets, Review," *Revue d'Assyriologie* 66 (1972): 89 n.4. Kühne's brilliant rereading of what Fisher considered to be the personal name "Pidda" as the West Semitic *bitta*, "daughter," in this text was the key to identifying the daughter of the Great Lady with the daughter of Bentešina and understanding the collection as a whole (cf. 1957.1: 6, 10, 18, 21). See Kühne, "Ammistamru Und Die Tochter Der 'Grossen Dame'," 177. Kühne's further deduction that the title "Great Lady" referred to Gaššuliyawiya has since been argued with ample support from the Hittite context by Singer (Singer, "The Title 'Great Princess' in the Hittite Empire," 334-335). Kühne's analysis and Singer's expansion on it will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

of kings in Amurru made their daughter an embodiment of the Hittite imperial presence within the political life of Amurru and by extension Ugarit.

The core of the verdict, 20 lines out of the total 50 lines of the text, is devoted to the terms of her son's status as heir. The passage opens with the statement that Utrišarruma is the *tardennu* in Ugarit. While this term in general use might refer to any kind of secondary position, in Hittite contexts, *tardennu* is used specifically to refer to the position of crown prince, in parallel to the title *tuhkanti*.<sup>222</sup> Yet in no other text at Ugarit is the term used to refer to this position within the Ugaritic succession.<sup>223</sup> The term is used in the context of succession only in lists of tribute given by the king of Ugarit to the Hittite royal family (RS 17.227, RS 17.330-17.347-17.446).<sup>224</sup> The order of these lists is consistent: first tribute to the king is listed, then the queen, the *tardennu*, and other royal officials. The queen and the *tardennu* receive identical tribute, second in value only to the king's. The proximity of the reigning queen and the royal heir in this list and the equal value of their tribute offers another trace of a symbolic and political association between their positions effective in Hatti and recognized in Ugarit. The use of the term *tardennu* might simply represent the application of Hittite royal terminology to the structure of power in Ugarit, yet its coincidence here to refer to one who was the product of the

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<sup>222</sup> On the association of *Tartennu* to the Hittite title *tuhkanti*, see O. R. Gurney, "The Hittite Title *Tuhkanti*," *Anatolian Studies* 33 (1983): 97-101.

<sup>223</sup> Note however that *trtn* appears in RS 19.016:28 (KTU 4.609), a record of barley distribution to royal servants, and in RS 19.044: 25 (KTU 4.617) *bn trdn*, possibly as a personal name. See Frauke Gröndahl, *Die Personennamen Der Texte Aus Ugarit* (Rome: Typis Pontificiae Universitatis Gregorianae, 1967) 262, 266.

<sup>224</sup> PRU IV: 40-44. See Gary N. Knoppers' discussion of the term in "Treaty, Tribute List, or Diplomatic Letter: KTU 3.1 Reexamined," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 289 (1993): 89 and Gernot Wilhelm, "Ta/Erdennu, Ta/Urtannu, Taurtānu," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 2 (1970): 277-82.

extension of the Hittite royal lineage in Amurru and Ugarit by means of the daughter and granddaughter of Ḫattušili III is significant.

Utrišarruma's connection through his mother to the Hittite royal family and the identification of his position in Ugarit with a term found predominantly in Hittite contexts evokes the larger network of relationships at stake in this verdict. By divorcing the daughter of Bentešina, Ammistamru II was severing not simply an agreement with Amurru but arguably a connection to Hatti. If Bentešina's treaty with Ḫattušili III mandated the preeminence of the Gaššuliyawiya's descendants in Amurru, making her son the reigning king, it is very likely that a similar prestige would have fallen to her daughter in Ugarit as well. While certainly no official record of the terms of the marriage arrangement between Ammistamru II and his bride survives other than the verdicts concerning the divorce, the fact that her son is recognized as *tardennu* indicates that an agreement about succession must have been in place. That this agreement would have been known to all parties concerned is further indicated by the laconic nature of the text. The immediate corollary to the statement that Utrišarruma is the *tardennu* is a list of stipulations should he choose to follow his mother.

*u Utrišarruma ina Ugarit  
tardennu šūt. šumma  
Utrišarruma iqabbi  
mā arki ummīya allak-mi*

Now Utrišarruma in Ugarit  
is the *tardennu*. If  
Utrišarruma says  
“I will follow my mother” . . .  
(RS 17.159: 22-25)

Up to this point in the text, the focus has been on “the daughter of Bentešina,” identified thus three times. The logical connection between these forgoing judgments and this introduction of Utrišarruma hinges on the understanding that “the daughter of Bentešina” is his mother. However, no explicit statement concerning their relationship is made in the text, as against the previous case concerning the exile of Ammistamru II’s brothers, in which Aḫatumilki is identified unequivocally as “*Aḫātumilku ummašunu šarrat Ugarit*; Aḫatumilki, their mother, queen of Ugarit”(RS 17.352: 6-7). Instead, the oblique statement, “*šumma Utrišarruma iqabbi mā arki ummīya allak*; if Utrišarruma says, ‘I will follow my mother,’” carries the weight of the association between them.

To introduce the relationship of the “daughter of Bentešina” and Utrišarruma in this way indicates several assumptions at work in the verdict. First, all parties concerned—the Hittite imperial authorities and the royal families of Amurru and Ugarit—recognized the “daughter of Bentešina” as the mother of the heir. Second, the fact that she had been irrevocably divorced by Ammistamru II and was no longer queen of Ugarit did not annul her relationship to her son or the political influence she could potentially exercise as mother of the heir or other royal children. Finally, the suggestion that the heir to the throne might choose to follow his mother to Amurru suggests that, although she had lost her position in Ugarit, she still possessed a status apart from this position that was significant enough to make such a choice viable or even attractive to her son. While the nature of her status and what Utrišarruma’s own would have been by extension in Amurru is unstated, the extreme consequences Ammistamru II apparently considered necessary to prevent the heir from following his mother betray the political

stakes of the situation. In a vivid idiom found in other legal texts concerned with forfeiting an inheritance, the verdict proclaims that if Utrišarruma chooses to follow his mother, he must “put his garment on the stool and leave, [ṣ]ubātšu ina litti liškun littalak” and Ammistamru will designate another son as heir, “māršu šanâm-ma ina Ugarit [ana ta]rtenutti iškkan”(RS 17.159: 26-31).<sup>225</sup>

The next scenario the verdict imagines is critical to understanding the scope and underlying assumption concerning the position a royal woman might continue to hold after the death of her husband, the king. Should Ammistamru II die, or “go to his fate, *ina šimtišu illak*,” and Utrišarruma then take his mother and return her to the office of the queen in Ugarit, “*ina Ugarit ana šarratutti utārši*,” then again he must forfeit his inheritance and leave Ugarit, “*ṣubātšu ina litti liškun littalak*,” and the Hittite Great King will restore another son of Ammistamru as king in Ugarit, “*māra šanâm-ma ina Ugarit ana šarrutti iškkan*” (RS 17.159: 32-42). The most basic assumption here is one we have seen in action in the position of Aḫatumilki: the mother of the king could continue to hold the position of queen after the death of her husband into the reign of her son. In fact, such a scenario was apparently conceivable even in this extreme case in which the king clearly forbade his wife from holding this position in his own lifetime. The key word in this statement is the verb “*utārši*.” She is imagined not simply being appointed as queen, but *returned* to her position as queen. This statement, alongside the list of specialized tribute she had acquired in Ugarit and the fact that her son was the designated

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<sup>225</sup> John Huehnergard’s rendering of the idiom, “*ṣubātšu ina littim liškun littalak*,” is apt, “to leave without a stitch.” See Huehnergard, “Biblical Notes on Some New Akkadian Texts from Emar (Syria),” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 47 (1985): 428-434.

heir, is the strongest evidence that the “daughter of Bentešina” had not been simply a high-status wife but the reigning queen prior to the divorce and that she might otherwise have held this position, as Aḫatumilki did, after the death of her husband.

The use of the term *šarratuttu*, queenship, makes it clear that the power Utrišarruma’s mother might exercise in the wake of Ammistamru II’s death would be *ex officio*. This fact indicates that a royal woman maintaining the position of queen was not simply the consequence of force of personality or power of a particular woman or the consequence of the youth of her son. Rather, the use of the term *šarratuttu* evokes a concept of a recognized office, which could be maintained or lost, just as a royal man could secure, usurp, or lose the kingship. Here again, Hattušili III’s dictates concerning his daughter’s position in Amurru are evoked: his daughter will hold queenship and her offspring will correspondingly hold the kingship. In the verdict RS 17.159, the term *šarratuttu* is also in parallel with the masculine equivalent, *šarruttu*, but in an ironic inversion. If Utrišarruma returns his mother to the office of the queen, *ina Ugarit ana šarratutti utārši*, then the Hittites will install another of his father’s sons into the office of the king, *ina Ugarit ana šarrutti išakkan*. The son will lose what his mother stands to gain if he assists her. This respective status of mother and son is the inverse of the relative status Ammistamru II enjoyed with his mother. While Aḫatumilki’s authority as queen reinforced that of her son, any attempt of Utrišarruma’s mother to exercise authority as queen will jeopardize her son’s power. This verdict ultimately seeks to prevent the kind of collaboration between royal mother and son from which Ammistamru II himself had benefited.



The fact that Ammistamru II not only sanctions but seeks Hittite intervention to prevent collaboration between mother and son after his death is significant. In the case of his own tenure as king in the face of a conflict with his brothers, the Hittite imperial powers were involved only in authorizing his mother's exile of her own sons. However, in this situation, Ammistamru II demands an assurance that after his death, the Hittite Great King will take up the cause of a brother of the king and remove the designated heir. The principles governing dynastic succession in Ugarit are significantly altered by this verdict. Ammistamru II is willing to concede to the Hittites the power to designate another, unspecified son as king in Ugarit in order to protect his own immediate authority over his wife and heir. Although there is some speculation that Arḫalba, Ammistamru II's uncle who briefly ruled as king in Ugarit prior to the accession of his father Niqmepa, had been removed by the Hittites,<sup>226</sup> no evidence survives to document such a scenario and no treaty or legal text prior to RS 17.159 explicitly grants or asserts the right of the Hittite authorities to intervene in the Ugaritic succession. None of the surviving copies of

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<sup>226</sup> Nougayrol speculates that Arḫalba's Hurrian name reflects a period, during this brief rule (c. 1315-1313), in which Ugarit returned to the influence of the Egyptian-Hurrian political sphere that preceded Šuppiluliuma I's hegemony in Syria. He reads the preamble of Niqmepa's later treaty with Muršili II as indicating that Niqmepa had been put on the throne with the intervention of the Hittite Great King, perhaps even after a period of exile (Nougayrol, PRU IV: 57). However the only surviving portion of the preamble of this treaty, in its various fragmentary copies, that indicates such an intervention (RS 17.353:2, *ana kussî abika ultēšibka*) can also be read as a feature of the formulaic preamble which appears or is reconstructed for the group of Syrian treaties of this early Hittite imperial period (Šuppiluliuma I and Aziru of Amurru, CTH 49; Muršili II and Tuppišub of Amurru, CTH 62; see Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 26). The formula of seating the vassal king on the throne of his father appears in these Syrian treaties whether or not other evidence substantiates an actual intervention by the Hittites as in the case of Šattiwazaattiwaza of Mittanni and Bentešina of Amurru, both cases, significantly, in which not only is there evidence for deposition, civil war and reinstatement but also for a Hittite vassal marriage at the point of reinstatement, a provision not made in the other treaties including that with Niqmepa. Singer argues that the evidence for a Hittite coup replacing Arḫalba with Niqmepa is "purely circumstantial. Arḫalba's prompt disappearance could simply have been caused by non-political circumstances, such as sudden illness or death" (Singer, "Political History of Ugarit," 638).

the vassal treaty Ammistamru II's father Niqmepa signed with the Hittite Great King Muršili II contains a clause designating the Ugaritic succession (CTH 66).

What would motivate such a concession in sovereignty, not only to allow but to require that the Hittite Great King install the king of Ugarit? We might speculate on the depths of rage and revenge to which a cuckolded king would have gone, assuming as many commentators have that adultery on the part of the queen precipitated the divorce.<sup>227</sup> Yet another more pragmatic, if less colorful, possibility is that the purpose of these stipulations is not so much to seek the intervention of the Hittite Great King in arbitrating the succession in Ugarit but to limit the Hittite influence in Ugarit which was already in place with the queenship of the daughter of Bentešina and the “*tardennu*-ship,” *tardenutti* (RS 17.159: 30) of Utrišarruma. To sever the expected relation between royal mother and son when imperial and interdynastic relations were at stake required the confirmation and support of the imperial authorities, especially in a period in which the Hittites were intimately invested in the dynastic succession in Amurru. Ammistamru II would then not simply be constructing the most extreme consequences for Utrišarruma should he reinstate his mother, the queen, but he would also be securing a promise from the Hittite Great King Tudḫaliya IV not to oppose under any circumstance the repudiation of a queen who was Tudḫaliya IV's own niece or to support her son should he do the same. Such a scenario is more consistent with the stance Ugarit developed with regard to Hittite hegemony. Rather than sending troops to support Hatti, as was expected

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<sup>227</sup> See especially Márquez-Rowe, “The King of Ugarit, His Wife, Her Brother, and Her Lovers: The Mystery of a Tragedy in Two Acts Revisited,” *Ugarit-Forschung* 32 (2000): 365-372. The supposition of adultery will be discussed in the following chapter.

of Hittite vassals, during the Hittite conflict with Assyria, Ammistamru II paid Tudḫaliya IV 50 minas of gold. As we shall see in the chapters that follow, the ability to leverage the considerable wealth of the commercially successful kingdom to establish a measure of independence played a deciding factor in the final stages of Ammistamru II's negotiations concerning the ultimate fate of the daughter of Bentešina.

## CONCLUSION

The verdict concerning the daughter of Bentešina anticipates a range of scenarios in which a royal son might choose to ally himself with his mother in the lifetime of his father or after his father's death, or those in which a queen might appeal to her son or other royal offspring to be reinstated in her position (RS 17.159: 43-49). All of these cases presume the respective nature of the status of royal women and their children and the motivation of each in supporting the other. The comprehensiveness with which the verdict anticipates such scenarios indicates the critical nature of these political bonds and the impact they might have on the king. As evident also in the case of Aḫatumilki, the ability of a queen to remain in power over the course of the reign of her husband into the reign of her son could shape the dynamics of succession and the mechanism of royal power. Although their outcomes were dramatically different, the verdicts concerning Aḫatumilki and the daughter of Bentešina ultimately deal with points of transition in male authority, whether to the furthest extension of an imagined patrilineal posterity, as in the case concerning Ammistamru II and his brothers, or within an immediate

succession between father and son, as in the case concerning Ammistamru II and Utrišarruma. Royal women not only physically produced dynastic heirs; they were integral to the intergenerational transitions of power between men that constituted political reproduction. The difference in the political context in which these queens established their positions was a deciding factor in the ability of each woman to maintain the centrality of her position within such transitions and promote the interests of her son.

The cases of these royal women and their sons provide a basis on which to understand the relationship between royal women and their sons in the Ugaritic letters. The letters alert us to the close coordination that was possible between at least one royal woman and her son concerning diplomatic and military matters. The Hittite verdicts allow us to identify the stakes of such relationships within particular historical moments. When Aḫatumilki came before the imperial court as her son's collaborator she brought with her the lived experience of similar dynastic power struggles in Amurru and Hatti that had established the political footing upon which the current Hittite Great King stood. The daughter of Bentešina was a product of the immediate political moment and brought nothing to the case other than her own royal and imperial pedigree, which necessitated that her case be arbitrated in an imperial court. She had given her son a status recognizable through the Hittite term *tardennu*, but she could not maintain her own. Here we have considered what the daughter of Bentešina's loss of status meant for her and her son. In the chapters that follow we will consider what her loss of status meant for the other men who had a stake in her case, in particular, her husband Ammistamru II and her brother Šaušgamuwa, the king of Amurru. The intersection of these two perspectives on

the consequences of the daughter of Bentešina's loss of status—on the one hand for her son and on the other for her brother and husband—reveals the centrality of royal women in mediating relationships between men across dynastic generations and among men within interdynastic and imperial politics.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE DIVORCE OF THE DAUGHTER OF THE GREAT LADY

The political world of Late Bronze Age Syria was woven together, as we have seen, by interdynastic and imperial-vassal marriages. From the first onslaught of Šuppiluliuma's mid-14<sup>th</sup> century military conquests, which established Hittite rule in Syria, a primary strategy by which Hittite Great Kings consolidated their power was to give their daughters and sisters as wives to subjugated kings. When such alliances were made, the imperial-vassal treaties stipulated the primacy of the Hittite royal women as ruling queens in the subjugated kingdom and of their offspring as royal heirs. The political dominance of Hittite Great Kings was thus embodied in the position of their sisters and daughters in vassal kingdoms. The relationships forged between Hittite royal women and vassal rulers were not simply signs of an agreement; they were fundamental to the symbolic and human architecture of imperial rule. In the case of Amurru, both Bentešina and his son married Hittite royal women as part of vassal alliances with Hatti. Yet alongside these imperial-vassal marriage alliances, interdynastic marriages between royal households in Syria continued. The previous chapter dealt with texts concerning two such interdynastic alliances in which royal women from Amurru married kings of Ugarit: Ammistamru II's mother Aḫatumilki and Ammistamru II's wife, the daughter of Bentešina. The outcomes of these two successive interdynastic marriages were dramatically different. Aḫatumilki continued to be recognized as queen of Ugarit after her husband's death and she defended her son's position as king. Ammistamru II's wife

lost her position as queen and her connection to her son and was forbidden from reassuming her position even after the death of her husband.

These two cases shed light on expectations concerning relationships between royal mothers and sons and demonstrate the dramatically different ways in which such relationships might work out. The present chapter will move the analysis beyond mother-son relationships by considering the position of royal women as wives, sisters, and daughters. I will examine the role of royal women as points of contact between royal households. Taken together, these two lenses of analysis reveal that the capacity of a royal woman to function simultaneously as a mother, daughter, sister, and wife provided a framework for political relatedness among men. The relative positions of royal men were expressed and shaped by their relationships to royal women. The case of Ammistamru II's deposed wife is a primary example of this phenomenon. She was not simply a member of the royal household of Amurru. As discussed in the previous chapter, decades of scholarship have established that she was also the daughter of the Hittite princess Gaššuliyawiya whose marriage to Bentešina, king of Amurru, established the vassal alliance between Amurru and Hatti under the reign of Ḫattušili III. By virtue of her positions in Ugarit and Amurru and her Hittite descent, Gaššuliyawiya's daughter embodied the intersection of interdynastic and imperial alliances.

The two imperial verdicts that dictated the terms of her divorce from Ammistamru II, which were discussed in the previous chapter, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, represent only one stage of the political crisis that her divorce precipitated. The subsequent texts that document the ensuing conflict between the kings of Ugarit and Amurru are the focus

of this chapter and the chapter that follows. These texts include Hittite legal verdicts issued from authorities in Hatti and Karkamiš as well as direct accords between Ammistamru II and the woman's brother, Šaušgamuwa, who was king of Amurru at the time of the divorce. The terms that identify the woman in these texts are as strategic as those discussed in the previous chapter. On the one hand, they communicate her position from the vantage point of Ammistamru II's political aims; on the other, they convey her imperial status and her position in Amurru. Tracing the trajectory of this case and the competing terms in which the woman's position and identity were expressed offers a vivid portrait of the political landscape of Hittite Syria in the 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE. The case communicates both the mechanisms of Hittite rule and the political agency the king of Ugarit leveraged with it. The dispute recorded in these texts was more than an Ugaritic and Amurrite inter-dynastic marriage alliance gone awry. The negotiations over this woman's fate became a test of the king of Ugarit's power to assert his interests within the established imperial and intra-regional system. Within the very legal structures that would otherwise be expected to protect her, Ammistamru II strips his wife of her status in both Ugarit and Amurru and finally executes her.

The key to understanding the political significance of the case lies in establishing the woman's identity and accurately defining the corpus of the associated texts. Over the past half-century the woman's identity and the question of whether the legal texts record the fate of one or two women has been debated. The major obstacle to interpreters was accepting that a single woman could be the referent of a string of relational identifiers and that the set of relational identifiers found in any one text might change over the



course of the dispute. I argue that not only could a single royal woman be identified by multiple relational terms, but that the particular constellation of such terms used in a single text was intentional and communicated the stakes of the verdict. The woman is called: the wife of Ammistamru II (DAM-*sú*), the daughter of Bentešina (DUMU.MUNUS <sup>1</sup>ZAG.ŠEŠ), the daughter of the Great Lady (<sup>f</sup>*bí-it-ta ra-bi-ti*; DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*ra-bi-ti*), and the sister of Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru (NIN-*šu*). Each of these terms signaled the interest of a particular party to the case. The set of relational terms that appear in these texts indicate the varying investments of the rulers of Ugarit, Amurru, and Hatti in the conflict.

#### **DEFINING THE CORPUS, IDENTIFYING THE WOMAN**

The initial imperial verdicts that document the divorce, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, are two among a group of texts pertaining to this crisis that were uncovered among the other international diplomatic texts in the Southern Archive in the 17<sup>th</sup> season of excavation at Ugarit. The texts concerning this crisis are greater in number than any group of texts in the archive and they show that the conflict engaged all the major political figures of that period: the Hittite Great King, Tudḫaliya IV; the Hittite viceroy in Karkamiš, Initešub; Ammistamru II, king of Ugarit; and a constellation of royal women and men in Amurru, including the reigning king, Šaušgamuwa, and his brothers. The number and variety of the texts have engendered successive efforts over the past sixty years to order and interpret the verdicts and thus to establish the sequence of events. The

primary issue in the reconstruction of the conflict in the initial decades following the discovery of the texts was the problem of whether a single woman was at the center of the conflict or whether the texts represent two successive divorces by Ammistamru II of two Amurrite royal women.

The basis for interpreting these texts as records of two successive divorces was the division that could be drawn between the texts by virtue of the terms in which they identified the woman. Two of these texts, those discussed in the previous chapter, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, identified Ammistamru II's repudiated wife as "the daughter of Bentešina." Six of the texts identified Ammistamru II's repudiated wife as "the daughter of the Great Lady." Up until the publication in 1971 of a tablet that included both these identifying terms in reference to the same woman, "the daughter of Bentešina" and "the daughter of the Great Lady" were considered to be two different women.<sup>228</sup> However, even in his *editio princeps*, Jean Nougayrol expressed some hesitancy in making this division. He suggested two plausible scenarios in which both one wife or two successive wives might have engendered this series of negotiations. Presciently he remarked, "Jusqu'à plus ample information et par simple souci de method, nous devons donc

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<sup>228</sup> Loren Fisher records that while on sabbatical in Paris in 1969, he was shown a collection of tablets from Ras Shamra that became available for sale. With the support of colleagues at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity based in Claremont University Center he raised funds to acquire the tablets, which were published in 1971, within a year of their acquisition. The tablets were given the numbers RS 1957 because they were assumed to have taken illegally from the site in 1957 when the regular excavations were not being carried out. See Loren R. Fisher, "Introduction," *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets*, Loren R. Fisher, ed. (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1971): 7-8. Subsequently the Board of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity sold the tablets to Martin Schoyen and they are now part of the Schoyen Collection through which they continue to be available for study.

distinguer les deux affaires et les deux personnes.”<sup>229</sup> Once this additional information came to light in 1971 in the form of the tablet RS 1957.1, Nougayrol, along with the majority of other scholars, firmly changed his interpretation of these texts as not two dossiers concerning two different women but an extended series of negotiations relating to a single royal woman.<sup>230</sup>

In what follows, I will present the progressive analysis of these texts over the past six decades, from their initial presentation by Nougayrol in the *editio princeps* to the most current understanding of the conflict in light of Hittite evidence that Itamar Singer brought to bear on the case. This historical survey of scholarly inquiry and hypotheses concerning the events of this case reveals developments in understanding the events to which the texts attest as well as a shift in the scholarly assessment of the capacity of these events to shed light on the larger inter-regional political system in which they took place. My contribution to this shift in assessment is to argue that, whereas in the first stages of scholarly analysis the terms in which the woman was identified were taken simply as a means to establish her identity, recent data allow us to see the use of these terms as the very heart of the political work of the legal verdicts. In short, I will argue that the terms by which the woman is identified tell us as much about the political relationships between the men involved in the case as they tell us about the woman at its center.

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<sup>229</sup> Nougayrol, PRU IV: 131. This recognition of the partially heuristic decision to divide the texts and its contingency on future find is an important one which was gradually lost as interpreters began to focus on the criminalization of the woman identified as “the daughter of the Great Lady.”

<sup>230</sup> Nougayrol, “L.R. Fisher, *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets*, review,” *Revue d'Assyriologie* 66 (1972): 89, n.4.

In the *editio princeps* of the Akkadian texts from the Southern Archive (PRU IV), Nougayrol presented the divorce texts as he presented all of the documents in this volume, grouped into a series of “dossiers” ordered in a historical sequence established by the rulers whose names appeared as arbitrators or plaintiffs in each case. Eight kings of Ugarit are attested in the texts of the Southern Archive: Ammistamru I, filiation not documented; Niqmadu II, son of Ammistamru I; Arḥalbu, son of Niqmadu; Niqmepa, son of Niqmadu; Ammistamru II, son of Niqmepa; Ibiranu, son of Ammistamru II; Niqmadu, son of Ibiranu; Ammurapi, filiation not documented. Nougayrol divided the texts into eight sets of dossiers associated with each of these eight kings, with an additional section comprising undated texts. The set of dossiers associated with Ammistamru II, group V, is by far the largest, with a total of 39 texts. Nougayrol divided these 39 texts into eight dossiers, assigned letter A to letter H. The two dossiers concerning the divorce, VC and VD, contain between them a total of 12 texts, meaning that this conflict generated more than 30 per cent of the international verdicts from Ammistamru II’s reign that survive in the Southern Archive.

Nougayrol’s dossier VC contains three texts, RS 17.159, RS 17.396, and RS 17.348.<sup>231</sup> The first two texts, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, discussed in the previous chapter, distinguish VC as a distinct dossier because both texts concern “the daughter of Bentešina.” Nougayrol included the fragmentary third text, RS 17.348, in this dossier because although the surviving portion of the text does not mention Bentešina’s name or

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<sup>231</sup> RS 17.159 (PRU IV: 126-7); RS 17.396 (PRU IV: 127-8); RS 17.348 (PRU IV: 128).

make use of the term “daughter” at all,<sup>232</sup> it appears to concern the Ugaritic royal succession and the physical features of the tablet suggest that it is, like the other two texts, a Hittite imperial verdict. In Nougayrol’s estimation, the apparent concern of the text with the Ugaritic royal progeny qualifies it to join RS 17.159. Nougayrol makes this association because he argues that the major interest of the Hittite verdict RS 17.159 is the question of the royal succession of Ugarit.<sup>233</sup> While the first section of RS 17.159 establishes the daughter of Bentešina’s divorce and exile from Ugarit, the majority of the verdict concerns her son, Ammistamru II’s heir Utrišarruma. As discussed in Chapter Two, the verdict decrees that, if he should choose to follow his exiled mother to Amurru, Utrišarruma will forfeit his right to succeed his father. Furthermore, even after his father’s death, when Utrišarruma has succeeded Ammistamru II as king, if he should try to reinstate his mother as queen, he will also lose his position as king. In this case, in the absence of his father, the Hittite Great King will have the power to choose another of Ammistamru II’s sons to be king.

Nougayrol rightly casts the decision forced on Utrišarruma to choose between loyalty to his mother or to his father as a political issue. Nougayrol argues that the exile threatened against Utrišarruma should he side with his mother is not simply a matter of removing his person but his influence: “ce qu’on entend proscrire d’Ugarit, ce n’est donc

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<sup>232</sup> However, after the publication of RS 1957.1 in which the syllabification of the West Semitic word for daughter (*bittu*; *bi-it-tu*) is used instead of the logogram DUMU.MUNUS, the fragmentary signs *pî/bi-id/it-*, which Nougayrol suggested might indicate a proper name, have been recognized as the syllabically rendered West Semitic term *bittu*, daughter. See Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 175-184.

<sup>233</sup> Nougayrol, PRU IV: 125.

pas seulement une personne, mais son esprit, son influence.”<sup>234</sup> Nougayrol conjectures that the political content of this influence was residual sympathy to the Egyptians within Ugarit in opposition to allegiance to the Hittites. Nougayrol suggests that Utrišarruma’s mother sided with the Egyptians, and thus it was in the interest of the Hittite Great King to support her removal and the removal of her son should he follow her sympathies: “serait-il possible qu’en pleine paix égypto-hittite on redoutât à Boghazkeui la présence en Ugarit d’une reine ou reine-mère trop égyptophile?”<sup>235</sup> This conjecture is supported only by an evocation of Bentešina’s transfer of loyalty from the Hittites to the Egyptians who invaded Amurru prior to the Battle of Qadeš, a defiance “Défaillance pardonnée par Ḫattušili, mais que Tudḫaliya n’avait oubliée.”<sup>236</sup> The postulation that both Bentešina and his daughter might still retain Egyptian loyalties is a difficult one to accept. Ḫattušili III’s brother Muwattalli II was king during the Battle of Qadeš and it was more correctly Muwattalli II with whom Bentešina broke faith. Ḫattušili III’s did not so much pardon Bentešina as cultivate him as an ally during his brother’s reign and make use of him as a part of his eventual move to take the kingdom from Muwattalli II’s heir, Urḫi-Tešub. Bentešina’s return as king to Amurru was predicated on his allegiance to Ḫattušili III. Bentešina’s allegiance to Ḫattušili III was instrumental in ensuring the security of the Hittite presence in Syria. Bentešina’s marriage to Ḫattušili III’s daughter Gaššuliyawiya, a primary stipulation of his vassal treaty, was both the means and the embodiment of the “Hittitization” of the royal family of Amurru. Any daughter of Bentešina, especially one

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

sent as representative of Amurru to Ugarit in the period following her father's reinstatement as king in Amurru under Hittite imperial auspices and his marriage to a Hittite princess, was not likely to be an Egyptian sympathizer.

While his conjecture concerning the nature of the political issue at stake may rest on speculative grounds, Nougayrol's analysis is innovative and remains so in that he frames the divorce and the fate of the daughter of Bentešina within the broader political context, rather than locating the case as personal drama on a royal scale. In his analysis, the woman's crime is a political one and the stipulations of the divorce and succession are meant to contain the potential rupture of rule within Ugarit or rupture in its allegiance to the Hittite powers. The essential connection here is that conflicts over succession are what tie contemporary events to long-term political relationships. The conflict between a royal woman and a king becomes a dispute not simply about the alliance between two kingdoms in an immediate political moment but a concern for future political alliances within a larger inter-regional context. While political succession is often considered a matter between fathers, sons, and brothers, here a royal woman is not simply a reproductive mediator between male generations but a political actor with a stake of her own in the succession. It was not enough for Ammistamru II to establish his primacy over his repudiated wife during his own lifetime; he needed to ensure that the stipulations of her divorce and exile would adhere even after his death. Ammistamru II's concern for his political posterity reveals that although a royal woman might lose her position, she was not truly displaced until she had lost her influence over the heirs she had produced.

Nougayrol's speculations about the daughter of Bentešina as an Egyptian sympathizer are germane not so much in terms of the content of the political background he suggests, but rather because of the premise on which his historical speculations rest. In Nougayrol's estimation, intervention by an inter-regional imperial power in a royal succession and a king's concern for maintaining a designated political order after his death all point to both mother and son representing an influence beyond the personal. Nougayrol argues that the assertion of the Hittite sovereign's right to intervene if necessary after Ammistamru II's death represented not simply an imperial assurance to a vassal king that the latter's will would be enforced but a way for the Hittites to assert their own prestige within Ugarit.<sup>237</sup> Whether or not the immediate issue was factions of Egyptian sympathizers as Nougayrol suggests, the fact remains that determining the political position of a royal woman and her relationship to her son provided an opportunity for both a king and a Great King to manifest their authority.

Nougayrol's lens of analysis shifts in his presentation of the texts he assigned to the second dossier, VD, those that identify Ammistamru II's repudiated wife as "the daughter of the Great Lady." The dossier includes eight texts uncovered in the Southern Archive and one from the previous excavation season that was found in the Central Archives. The texts from the Southern Archive are RS 17.116 (VD 1); RS 18.06-17.365 and RS 17.459 (VD 3); RS 17.372 A-17.360, RS 17.228, RS 17.450, and RS 17.318-

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<sup>237</sup> "Le roi Hittite se réservait d'intervenir directement contre son retour, si besoin était. Autant sans doute pour défendre son prestige à la Cour d'Ugarit que pour en écarter les désordres intérieurs car les factions n'y étaient pas mortes"(Ibid).



17.349 (VD 4); and RS 17.082 (VD5).<sup>238</sup> Nougayrol presents the text found in the Central Archive during previous excavation season, RS 16.270, as the second one in the dossier (VD2).<sup>239</sup> These texts are grouped together because the central figure in all of them is a royal woman identified as “DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*ra-bi-ti*,” “the daughter of the Great Lady.”

The text that Nougayrol presents as the first in the dossier, RS 17.116, is a fragmentary letter between two men that concerns a woman who is the wife of the addressee. The writer acknowledges that the woman has committed an offense against the addressee (*a-na ka-a-ša ti-iḫ-ta-ṭi*) and states that she has also offended him (RS 17.116: 8'-13'). He tells her husband that he has brought her back to his place of residence, has placed her with her brothers, and will not send her back to him (RS 17.116: 14'-20'). The writer's claim that he has written to the king of Karkamiš concerning this matter signals that the issue is not a private one within Ugarit but rather an issue that merits the intervention of the Hittite authorities. Nougayrol interprets this text as one written by Šaušgamuwa to Ammistamru II once Šaušgamuwa's sister has fled to Amurru in the wake of committing her offense.<sup>240</sup> He argues that Šaušgamuwa's

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<sup>238</sup> RS 17.116 (VD 1; PRU IV: 132-4); RS 18.06-17.365 and RS 17.459 (VD 3; PRU IV: 137-8); RS 17.372 A-17.360, RS 17.228, RS 17.450, and RS 17.318-17.349 (VD 4; PRU IV: 139-146); and RS 17.082 (VD 5; PRU IV: 147-148).

<sup>239</sup> RS 16.270 (PRU IV: 134-6; previously, PRU III: 41-44).

<sup>240</sup> Yaron objects to this, but his objection can be countered. If the letter does reflect a private affair within Ugarit, as he suggests, then Ammistamru II, not the king of Karkamiš, would be the higher authority to whom the writer would appeal. The fact that the Hittite authority is brought into discussion means that this has to be an inter-regional diplomatic problem rather than a private one. See Reuven Yaron, “A Royal Divorce at Ugarit,” *Orientalia NS* 32 (1963): 22. Shlomo Izre'el concurs with Nougayrol's initial asssment that Šaušgamuwa is the writer of the letter (Izre'el, *Amurru Akkadian a Linguistic Study, Volume 2*, 75).

intention was to appease Ammistamru II with assurance that his sister would not return to resume her intrigues in Ugarit.<sup>241</sup> As shall be discussed below, a significant feature of the letter is that it does not identify the woman as “the daughter of the Great Lady.”

The second text Nougayrol presents in the dossier, RS 16.270, is also fragmentary, but nonetheless it is clearly an accord between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru, and is impressed with both Ammistamru II’s personal and dynastic seals.<sup>242</sup> This text, found in the Central Archive in the sixteenth season of excavation, was the first to reveal the figure of “the daughter of the Great Lady.” RS 16.270 set the stage for interpreting the other texts in that its main concern is to establish the guilt and wrongdoing of “the daughter of the Great Lady.” Furthermore, the language used to depict her offense raised the issue of adultery that has shaped the focus of later interpreters. The text is fragmentary, with only the central and final sections clearly discernible. The passage that begins in line 12 is an extended accusation of the woman’s

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<sup>241</sup> Nougayrol, PRU IV: 129.

<sup>242</sup> Some debate has existed as to the point of origin of this text. In corrections and additions to *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription*, John Huehnergard writes, “The Ugarit Akkadian text PRU 3 41ff. (RS 16.270) was not included in our corpus because it seemed possible that it was written at Amurru. Several scholars have, however, convincingly argued that it was indeed written at Ugarit (Kühne 1973: 183; Izre’el 1991: 22-23; 1992: 169; Márquez-Rowe 2000). Thus the writing *-na-a*, which in context is obviously the 1cp suffix ‘our’, provides the vocalization of that suffix in Ugaritic (with the same vowel as in Arabic, Aramaic, and Ethiopic, vs. Hebrew *-nû*, Akkadian *-ni*).” See John Huehnergard, “Additions and Corrections,” *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription, Revised Edition*, Harvard Semitic Studies 32 (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2008) 375.

Márquez-Rowe pointed out three Northwest Semitic features in the text: 1. 3fs pronominal (genitive) suffix spelled *-sa* (RS 16.270: 24); 2. 3fs verbal prefix */t-/* (lines 24, 25, 27); 3. the use of */u/* to introduce main clauses after subordinate clauses (line 22). However, he also considered the most definitive feature indicating Ugaritic influence to be the “EN-*na-a*” in lines 19, 26, 27; reflecting */-nā/* 1cp suffix in Ugaritic vs. Akkadian *-ni*. See Márquez-Rowe “The King of Ugarit, His Wife, Her Brother, and Her Lovers. The Mystery of a Tragedy in Two Acts Revisited,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 32 (2000): 365-372 370; Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 183, n.79; and Shlomo Izre’el, *Amurru Akkadian: A Linguistic Study*, 23.

wrongdoing phrased as the speech of the men of Ugarit before Ammistamru II. The initial portion of this speech is broken, but beginning in line 19 is the accusation that when Ammistamru was away from the kingdom, when he would go to the countryside or travel to Karkamiš, she would make the elite men of the kingdom come into her presence and would dishonor the king by “flirting” with them, “*ana pānīsa tušerreb u ittīšunu teššenêh*”(RS 16.270: 24-25). The concluding section is again unclear, but it records a transfer of the woman, likely from Ugarit to Amurru, and the prohibition against Ammistamru II pursuing further legal action.<sup>243</sup>

Nougayrol does not comment on the depiction of the daughter of the Great Lady's behavior with the elites of Ugarit, but later commentators would take this text at face value as evidence that her crime was adultery.<sup>244</sup> Nougayrol's concern with the text is the light it sheds on the negotiations between the two kings manifested in the movement of the woman between the two kingdoms. He reads it as evidence that Ammistamru II made

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<sup>243</sup> Nougayrol's brief commentary on the text that begins with line 19 is perplexing. He reads this section as referring to a plot on the part of the men of Ugarit to seize the daughter of the Great Lady from Amurru while Šaušgamuwa is away from his kingdom (PRU IV: 135). However in the phrases “*enūma šarru bēlnā ana [ . . . ] ana šēri illak [ . . . ] ia-nu-ma ana Karkamiš illa[k . . . ]*”; When the king, our lord, to . . . would go to the countryside . . . or (when) he would go to Karkamiš” the subject of the action must be Ammistamru II as the men of Ugarit call him “*bēlnā*, our lord”(RS 16.270: 19-21).

<sup>244</sup> Aro's argument in his review of PRU IV that the daughter of the Great Lady's crime was political became a lone interpretive voice over the course of the ensuing decades. Aro argued that the term “great sin” referred to high treason and referred to a plot to remove Ammistamru II from the throne either by his exiled wife or by a second wife who was the sister of the exiled queen. See Jussi Aro, “*Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit. III. Textes Accadiens et Hourrites des Archives Est, Ouest et Centrales* (Mission de Ras Shamra, Tome VI) by Jean Nougayrol; G. Boyer; E. Laroche, Review,” *Archiv für Orientforschung* 18 (1957-1958) 143-144.

However, as we shall see, Moran's argument that the use of the expression “great sin” meant that the woman's crime was adultery formed the basis of subsequent scholarship, the most dramatic statement of this thesis being Márquez-Rowe's article, “The King of Ugarit, His Wife, Her Brother, and Her Lovers. The Mystery of a Tragedy in Two Acts Revisited.” Arnaud and Salvini's work in the early 90's, discussed in the following chapter, was the first substantial deviation from this thesis since Aro's speculations. See Daniel Arnaud and Mirjo Salvini, “Le Divorce du Roi Ammistamru d'Ougarit: un Document Redécouvert,” *Semitica* 41/42 (1991-1992): 7-22.

an effort to take the woman back to Ugarit from Amurru that was frustrated by Šaušgamuwa. This interpretation largely depends on the Hittite verdict RS 18.06-17.365 which Nougayrol assigns as immediately following RS 16.270. The verdict addresses Ammistamru II's imminent seizure of "the daughter of the Great Lady" from Šaušgamuwa's royal household in Amurru by the use of Ugaritic ships and soldiers, and it enumerates the dire consequences Šaušgamuwa will suffer if he tries to prevent Ammistamru II from seizing the woman. In the same vein as the consequences threatened against Utrišarruma should he oppose Ammistamru II's will, the verdict threatens Šaušgamuwa with the loss of his kingship and his life if he should oppose Ammistamru II and try to protect his sister. Nougayrol sees this verdict as the conclusion to the situation posed by RS 16.270 since it documents Ammistamru II's successful effort to counteract the stipulations he had previously agreed to and take his wife back to Ugarit from Amurru. The verdict is thus an answer to Ammistamru II's appeal to the Hittite authorities for support against Šaušgamuwa and an imperial decree that overrides any inter-regional accord.<sup>245</sup>

Nougayrol presents the following texts in the dossier, RS 17.372 A-17.360, RS 17.228, RS 17.450, and RS 17.318-17.349 (VD4), as agreements between the two kings that document Šaušgamuwa's astute negotiation of the terms of his concession to Ammistamru II.<sup>246</sup> These accords document his extradition of his sister, as she called in RS 17.318-17.349, but they also document the considerable payment in gold

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<sup>245</sup> Nougayrol, PRU IV: 130.

<sup>246</sup> "Šausgamuwa obéit (VD4), non sans habileté, à ce qu'il semble. Vaincu sur le fond du différend, il négocie avec adresse les modalités d'exécution de la sentence"(Ibid).

Ammistamru II gives to Šaušgamuwa in exchange for her life. Šaušgamuwa gives Ammistamru II the power to do as he likes to her, even to kill her if he wishes. The gold paid to the king of Amurru as well as to her brothers is characterized as blood money (RS 17.318-17.349: 23'-24'), which Ammistamru II pays when he "learned that she has died, *kī tamūt*"(RS 17.372A-17.360A: 8'-10'). These accords re-introduce the term sin or crime, "*hiṭṭu*," which first appeared in the letter RS 17.116, Nougayrol's first text in the dossier. Furthermore, the term is also amplified in the accords as "great crime, *hiṭṭu rabu*"( RS 17.372A-17.360A: 12). The term "*hiṭṭu rabû*," as noted above, is taken up by later interpreters as proof that the crime of which the woman was accused was adultery. RS 17.082, the final text in the dossier, is a Hittite verdict prohibiting any further retaliation by Šaušgamuwa or the "sons of the Great Lady" against Ammistamru II for the death of their sister.

The overt principle by which Nougayrol divided these texts into two dossiers, as we have seen, is whether the woman is identified as "the daughter of Bentešina" or "the daughter of the Great Lady." However, another aspect of his reading of these texts constitutes a basis for their separation. As noted above, Nougayrol places RS 17.348, which does not include the title "daughter of Bentešina," in the first dossier because of its concern with succession and inheritance. So too, his first text in the second dossier, the letter RS 17.116, does not use the term "daughter of the Great Lady"; rather the central figure is called "your wife" and "that woman"(RS 17.116: 8', 9', 14', 16'). The basis on which Nougayrol includes this letter in the second dossier is that the text addresses the woman's crime and punishment. Whereas Nougayrol argued that the first dossier's chief

point of interest was the arbitration of political lineage and inheritance in light of the divorce of “the daughter of Bentešina,” the second dossier is characterized by its concern with the dire punishment meted out to “the daughter of the Great Lady” for her unspecified crime against Ammistamru II.

Nougayrol’s final characterization of the distinction between the two dossiers makes this implicit premise clear. He states, “nous devons donc distinguer les deux affaires et les deux personnes, et admettre que le divorce correct de Ammistamru n’eut pas suite fâcheuse, tandis qu’une mort tragique termina l’aventure d’une autre de ses épouses.”<sup>247</sup> The distinction between the two dossiers rests in the “predicament,” the mortal punishment of the royal woman whose case is documented in the texts collected in the second dossier. The lack of any apparent consequence to the woman in the first dossier other than the loss of her political position and the wealth she accrued in Ugarit, coupled with her identification as “the daughter of Bentešina,” were grounds for separating these from those concerning “the daughter of the Great Lady” whose ultimate punishment was death. The implication is that the primary concern of a proper divorce, or one motivated by political factors, would be redrawing the lines of dynastic descent and succession that were set into motion when the marriage was arranged. On the other hand, the violence and personal nature of the punishment decreed against the woman identified as “the daughter of the Great Lady” is interpreted as indicating that the woman had committed a crime that implicated no one other than herself. The focus on her crime as such particularizes the conflict to the predicament of a single woman.

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

This underlying premise in the division of the tablets also bears on what is implicit in the formal division of the dossiers according to the titles that identify the woman. The two terms “daughter of Bentešina” and “daughter of the Great Lady” are not simply different, but their political content, or at least our comprehension of their political content, differs. The title “daughter of Bentešina” associates the woman with a royal man, a king, thus locating her in a larger political system defined by relationships between men. The title “daughter of the Great Lady,” on the other hand, associates her with a royal woman whose status, although certainly elevated, is unclear. Just as punishment that appears to affect only the fate of a royal woman particularizes the conflict into an individual predicament rather than a breach in a larger system, so too a title that identifies a woman only by the status of another royal woman cannot be set within a larger political system conceived only in terms of relationships between men. A woman identified by another woman is a closed circle. The “daughter of the Great Lady” is in this sense doubly dislocated from a political system ostensibly populated only by kings and their male heirs. Her punishment affects her alone and her title places her only in relationship to another woman. The assumption is that, while we know what a king is and what kinds of political systems support his position, in the case of royal women, we can rely only on the understood complementarity of the term “queen.” Simply put, the problem is that we think we have no evidence for how royal women functioned on their own terms or how relationships between royal women might illuminate the system of royal rule as a whole.

Such assumptions overlook data in the texts themselves. Distinctions between royal women are also distinctions between royal men. Women are not simply wives and mothers, but daughters, granddaughters, and nieces. Their status as such can reveal mechanisms of political relation across generations and among polities in an imperial, inter-regional system such as Syria was under Hittite rule. What can be known about “the daughter of the Great Lady” from these texts is that her maternal parentage distinguished her and that her fate was thus of concern both to her brother, the king of Amurru, and to the Hittite Great King. In his review of Nougayrol’s *editio princeps*, Cazelles considers this dimension of the title “the daughter of the Great Lady” in an interpretative move that would not be taken up again for another twenty years. Rather than dividing the two dossiers, Cazelles argues for uniting them and seeing the first texts as being the “first act” of the conflict.<sup>248</sup> His explanation for the shift in identification of the woman from “the daughter of Bentešina” to “the daughter of the Great Lady” is that the later texts were written from the perspective of her brother Šaušgamuwa who by that point had succeeded their father as king. Cazelles argues that the title “Great Lady” was an important one for Šaušgamuwa and for the kingdom of Amurru because the title was the term for “queen mother.” Thus the title identified both the prestige of his sister and the prestige of her maternal brothers whose titles “sons of the Great Lady” indicated that they were, like Šaušgamuwa, the offspring of both the king and the queen mother.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Henri Cazelles, “Review of J. Nougayrol *Palais Royal d’Ugarit IV*,” *Vetus Testamentum* 13 (1963): 104.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*



Cazelles' brief comment opens up a tremendously important line of inquiry. His assertion that the woman, Šaušgamuwa, and the woman's brothers all shared the prestige of being the offspring of the queen mother and that this prestige meant that Šaušgamuwa and his brothers had a vested interest in their sister's fate places the case in a larger political context. The case concerns not only the crime and punishment of a single woman but the standing of the royal household of Amurru as a whole, including both her brothers who were immediate parties to the case and the royal mother whose status distinguished her children. The title "daughter of the Great Lady" thus does not simply identify one woman in terms of another; it offers a key to relationships upon which the entire royal household was structured. Furthermore, the fact that his sister's status was a concern for Šaušgamuwa raises the question of what political capital a sister positioned in a neighboring kingdom might offer to her brother the king and what he stood to lose if she was deposed from her position. The key to answering this question is the recognition that a royal son inherited from his father both the rule of his native polity as well as the entire constellation of inter-regional political relationships established in his father's reign. A sister already positioned in a neighboring kingdom in her father's lifetime was in a fundamental sense a precursor to her brother the king in the work of inter-regional diplomacy. She was already serving as a representative of their native polity before her brother succeeded their father.

The motivation for making the kind of investment in capital required in a diplomatic marriage is usually considered only terms of its utility within the primary context of the woman's bestowal. However, as documented in another set of Late Bronze

Age texts, the Amarna letters, a brother could have a vested interest in his sister's status in a foreign kingdom as a point of leverage in his own dealings with that kingdom. When Tušratta, king of Mittani, succeeded his father, his first overture to Amenhotep III, king of Egypt, made reference to his sister's status as Amenhotep III's wife as a basis for the ongoing relationship between their two kingdoms and for Tušratta's own standing with the Egyptian king (EA 17:1-10).<sup>250</sup> Tušratta continued to invest wealth in maintaining and asserting his sister's position in the Egyptian court by sending her gifts along with the ones he sent the Egyptian king. The question Šaušgamuwa faced with regard to Ugarit was the same one that faced the kings of Mittani with regard to Egypt: at what point does the position of a sister in a foreign court become a liability rather than a resource for political advantage?<sup>251</sup> Šaušgamuwa's changing stance in the negotiations with

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<sup>250</sup> A closer look at the rhetoric of Tušratta's letter, alluded to previously in the introduction, reveals the strategy by which a man might attempt to leverage the position of his sister in another kingdom to his own advantage. The letter opens, "Sa[y] to Nibmuareya, the k[ing of Egypt], my brother: Thus Tuišeratta, the king of [M]ittani, your brother. For me all goes well. For you may all go well. For Kelu-Ḫeba may all go well. For your household, for your wives, for your sons, for your magnates, for your warriors, for your horses, for your chariots, and in your country, may all go very well" (EA 17: 1-10; Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 41). In the hierarchy expressed in this formulaic greeting, Kelu-Ḫeba is second only to the Egyptian king himself. However, subsequent letters indicate that Tušratta knew well that the Egyptian royal woman Tiye and not his sister was Amenhotep's primary wife and "mistress of Egypt." However, the rhetorical positioning of Kelu-Ḫeba's name asserts her prestige over against other royal women of the Egyptian king's household. Tušratta's implicit assertion of Kelu-Ḫeba's status is intended to advance his own. Tušratta evokes the former alliance between Amenhotep III and his father, embodied in the giving of Kelu-Ḫeba as a wife: "my father loved you, and you in turn loved my father. In keeping with this love, my father [g]ave you my sister" (EA 17: 1-10). In the context of Tušratta's succession after a civil war involving at least one of his brothers, one might even argue that in claiming his father's daughter as his sister, Tušratta also asserted his own link to his father and his legitimacy as the rightful heir. Rather than identifying Kelu-Ḫeba by name or as his father's daughter, Tušratta identifies her in relationship to himself, as "my sister." He thus inserts himself into the alliance between his father and Amenhotep III by virtue of his relationship to Kelu-Ḫeba.

<sup>251</sup> The fact that no record exists for Tušratta's son Šattiwaza continuing to send gifts to his sister Tadu-Ḫeba after he succeeded Tušratta as king of Mittani is a further indication of the shift in regional power from Egypt to Hatti. Supporting his sister within the Egyptian court was no longer feasible or even desirable in light of Mittani's capitulation to the Hittites.

Ammistamru II concerning his sister's fate was a product of his evaluation of what her fate would mean for his own standing relative to Ammistamru II. The fact that she was finally put to death was not simply a necessary consequence of her own actions but a result of the fact that Šaušgamuwa no longer deemed protecting her to be politically advantageous. She was an inherited investment from father to son that he was willing to surrender.

On the other hand, the persistence of the title "Great Lady" as a term identifying her daughter and her sons indicates a very different scenario. Behind the woman who held the title "Great Lady" was certainly a network of relationships that included her own male kinsmen. The elevated position in Amurru reflected in her title and in her status as the wife of Bentešina was the product of the investment of political and material capital. The fact that her status continued to be a basis for identifying her children into the subsequent generation indicated that this investment had been successful. Her status would not have continued as an identifying marker within the royal household of Amurru had her own family abandoned her or had she lost her position in her new kingdom as her daughter did. Thus, the title "daughter of the Great Lady" is not a closed circle after all, but a term that indicates the intersection of political interest in at least two royal households across at least two generations. Furthermore, in its context in these verdicts the title also embodies the conjunction of two very different but equally possible outcomes for royal women: the successful maintenance of status within the network of relationships in a royal household, across generations, or the loss of tenure in this network and thus the loss of life. Thus the title "daughter of the Great Lady" offers traces

of a network of political relationships between men in which to situate the drama of the repudiated woman, perhaps even on a level more sophisticated than the texts in which only the position of the woman's father is indicated.

We may go even farther in inquiring what political relationships might be implicated in the title "daughter of the Great Lady." Even without the evidence that would later identify the title "Great Lady" as one that occurred within the Hittite kingdom, one might still identify an imperial nuance in a use of the title "Great." What does it mean that the title "Great Lady" is not further distinguished with another title such as "queen"? Nougayrol concludes that because the term *rabītu* is not followed by any title it must itself be a title, a very high female title in Amurru.<sup>252</sup> Nougayrol then goes on to speculate that *rabītu* might be a title that identified a woman or wife of high status who was not the queen, thus distinguishing her daughter and sons as being the half-sister and brothers of Šaušgamuwa who was the son of the queen. Yet, might it not also be the case that such a title occurs in the absence of the designation "queen" because its authority is rooted in a political status beyond queenship? To assume that the title "great" was subordinate to the title "queen" runs contrary to the way the title "great" functions for male rulers. In the case of male authority, the title "great" made a distinction between a vassal king and an imperial Great King. Thus to assume that the title "Great Lady" distinguishes only a gradation of status within Amurru requires one to assume that "greatness" for women refers to relative status within a polity whereas greatness for men designated relative status between polities.

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<sup>252</sup> Nougayrol, PRU IV: 131.

Ironically, it was not until the appearance of the text RS 1957.1 in 1971, which equated the titles “daughter of Bentešina” and “daughter of the Great Lady,” that the network of relationships standing behind the title “Great Lady” and the nature of her “greatness” was discerned. In light of the realization that the daughter of Bentešina and the daughter of the Great Lady were the same woman, Cord Kühne brought the treaty between Bentešina and Ḫattušili III to bear on the case. He argued that according to the stipulations of this treaty, the reigning queen in Amurru could have been none other than the daughter of the Hittite Great King, Gaššuliyawiya.<sup>253</sup> This woman would have been more than a queen in Amurru; indeed, her queenship was predicated on her “greatness,” her affiliation with the Imperial family. Yet the evidence for such an association had been there from the very beginning in Nougayrol’s second dossier. Nougayrol had no doubt that the sons and daughter of the Great Lady were the offspring of Bentešina. The second dossier always contained evidence for an alliance between Bentešina and the Great Lady. The implication of this alliance was only recognized when the title “daughter of the Great Lady” was explicitly tied to the king. The obstacle had only been the inability to see the network of male interest within a title that linked two royal women.

#### **THE DAUGHTER OF A KING AND THE DAUGHTER OF A GREAT LADY**

The implicit distinction between a title that linked a woman to a king and a title that linked a woman to another royal woman persisted in the continued separation of the

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<sup>253</sup> Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 175-184.

dossiers in scholarship over nearly two decades. For a decade and a half following the publication of the *editio princeps*, scholars largely ignored Nougayrol's indication of the possibility of uniting the dossiers as well as Cazelles' argument that such unification made sense. The separation of the dossiers and the presence of two women and two divorces were taken for granted. The identities conjured by the "daughter of Bentešina" and "the daughter of the Great Lady" were further shaped by difference in the questions brought to bear on both dossiers. The "daughter of the Great Lady" dossier was perpetually cast in the light of drama of an adulteress pursued by a king, whereas the "daughter of Bentešina" dossier was more frequently mined as a source for law and Hittite imperial interest in dynastic succession in vassal kingdoms.<sup>254</sup> The implicit distinction Nougayrol made between a "regular" divorce with political consequences and a woman's predicament resulting in her mortal punishment persisted as a baseline for distinguishing two different women.

In 1959, William Moran published a brief yet highly influential article in which argued that the "great sin" of which the daughter of the Great Lady was accused was adultery. His argument solidified the distinction Nougayrol had drawn in dividing the texts into two dossiers: those concerning the daughter of Bentešina (RS 17.159 and RS 17.396) and those concerning the daughter of the Great Lady (RS 17.082 and the accords between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa). Nougayrol's distinction between a "proper divorce" which did not result in a "predicament" in RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, and the

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<sup>254</sup> See R. Yaron, "A Royal Divorce at Ugarit," *Orientalia* 32 (1963): 21-31. Yaron's use of the dossier as a source for law is predicated on drawing a distinction between the two dossiers and between adultery and "regular" divorce.

“tragic death” attested in the accords between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa and the final Hittite verdict RS 17.082, begged the question of what the woman had done to deserve such a tragic end.<sup>255</sup> Foregrounding the punishment made a focus on the crime inevitable. Indeed, although Moran’s argument was built around comparative study of the expression “great sin” in biblical texts, the nature of her punishment was a major component of his argument that the crime was adultery. He argued that reading the “great sin” as adultery would account for the punishment of death.

Moran’s argument that the term “great sin” in the tablets from Ugarit refers to adultery is drawn from a previous article by Jacob J. Rabinowitz. Rabinowitz argued that the expression “great sin” in Genesis 20:9 was parallel to the use of the term “great sin” in four Egyptian marriage contracts, in which the context identified the “great sin” as adultery.<sup>256</sup> However, in biblical legal texts which neither Rabinowitz nor Moran discusses, adultery is expressed only by the terms “to lie with” (*ʾiš šākēb ʿim ʾiššāh*) or “to commit adultery” (*yinʾaf ʿet-ʿēšet*) in Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22 respectively. Furthermore, the narrative passage in Genesis concerning Abimelek and Sarah in which the term “great sin” is used is complex. Abimelek cries out to Abraham, “What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you that you have brought upon me and upon my kingdom this great sin? *mēh-ʿāsītāh lānū ūmēh ḥātāʾtī lāk kī-hebeʾtā ʿalay wʿal-mamlaktī ḥātāʾāh gʿdōlāh*”(Gen 20:9). The phrase “great sin” is not used so

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid 130. See above, note 18.

<sup>256</sup> William Moran, “The Scandal of the ‘Great Sin’ at Ugarit,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18.4 (1959): 280; citing the previous article of Jacob J. Rabinowitz, “The ‘Great Sin’ in Ancient Egyptian Marriage Contracts,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18.1 (1959): 73.

much to refer to the act of adultery itself which has not yet occurred, but rather what Abraham has already brought on Abimelek and his kingdom by misrepresenting Sarah as his sister, allowing Abimelek to take her, and thus creating a situation in which adultery could have taken place.<sup>257</sup> Sarah as a potential adulteress who has committed or could have committed a “great sin” is nowhere included in this formulation. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the formulation, “a great sin upon myself and my kingdom, *‘ālay w<sup>ʿ</sup>al-mamlak<sup>t</sup>ī ḥaṭṭāʾāh g<sup>ʿ</sup>dōlāh*,” implies that the consequences of a king committing adultery are not simply on his own person but on his kingdom. The “great sin” involves corporate, political consequences.

In the other three passages in which the term “great sin,” is used, in Exodus 32:30, 31 and 2 Kings 17:21, the expression refers to the paradigmatic act of idolatry in the Hebrew Bible. The Exodus passage concerns the worship of the golden calves at Sinai and the passage in 2 Kings concerns the idolatry under Jeroboam’s reign, including the worship of golden calves, a depiction of idolatry modeled on the Exodus passage and presented as an explanation for the destruction of the Northern Kingdom. Rabinowitz reads the use of the term as “great sin” in these contexts as a categorical term for adultery extended metaphorically to an act of idolatry. However, in these passages no language concerning sexual behavior occurs. The association of the worship of the gold calves with an act of adultery depends purely on assuming that “great sin” is a term for adultery. The expression “great sin” in itself communicates only magnitude of the wrong-doing; it does

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<sup>257</sup> It is worth noting here that the context in which this term is used is a royal one. The implication is that adultery committed by a king would implicate both himself and his kingdom.



not characterize behavior. By contrast, when verbs such as *znh* or *nʿp*, “to act as a prostitute” and “to commit adultery,” are used metaphorically in the biblical text, they characterize habitual, ongoing relational behaviors, not a specific, paradigmatic religio-historical act. The purpose of using the verbs *znh* or *nʿp* is to communicate that the relationship of the people to the deity should follow the expected relationship of a wife to her husband and that when such a relationship is not maintained, the worship of other gods can be understood in terms of human sexual infidelity. The only linkage then between the term “great sin” and adultery is that the “great sin” in Exodus and 2 Kings was an act of idolatry and idolatry is frequently portrayed in other biblical texts as an act of adultery. It is far more likely that the term “great sin” is used in Exodus in a straightforward manner: to communicate the magnitude of the wrong-doing constituted by the worship of the golden calves, an act which became paradigmatic for subsequent acts of idolatry in Israel’s history.

This is not to argue that the “great sin” of which the daughter of the Great Lady is accused could not have been adultery, but rather that the argument that the term “great sin” in biblical texts refers to adultery is not a strong one. Adultery is not singled out in biblical legal texts as a “great sin” over against other sins. When the act of adultery is used as a metaphor to characterize idolatry, the term “great sin” is not used. Adultery does not function as a measure of magnitude when it is used metaphorically; rather, it characterizes a human-divine relationship on the model of human sexual behavior. Moran’s argument that the term “great sin” in the texts from Ugarit refers to adultery must be argued on other grounds than such biblical comparanda. Indeed, although Moran

invokes the biblical comparanda to identify the meaning of the term, his argument that the “great sin” committed by the daughter of the Great Lady is adultery implicitly rests on the fact that the punishment for adultery is death and death was the punishment for the daughter of the Great Lady. Moran concludes that interpreting her “great sin” as adultery “accounts for Ammistamru's obvious rage, it accounts for the punishment of death.”<sup>258</sup>

The claim that Ammistamru II is driven by rage is not so much an expression of what is in the text as it is an assumption that capital punishment for adultery is driven by an emotional response, one that is not present when the crime is ‘political’ as is assumed in the case of the daughter of Bentešina. This assumption is what underlies the distinction between the daughter of Bentešina’s regular divorce and the predicament of the daughter of the Great Lady. However, an act of adultery in a royal context is a profoundly political act. The purpose of an inter-dynastic royal marriage is to create political bonds by generating lines of succession in which both kingdoms have a stake. A sexual act outside an inter-dynastic marriage alliance on the part of a woman compromises the assured paternity of royal offspring upon which such lines of succession are based. Furthermore, to kill a royal woman is to kill a person who functioned as a representative of the kingdom from which she came. As suggested in the case of Abimelek and Sarah, adultery on a royal scale involves not simply individuals but kingdoms. The problem with the argument that the daughter of the Great Lady’s “great sin” against Ammistamru II was adultery is not simply that the evidence is equivocal, but that no reflections on the political stakes of the act or accusation of adultery have followed from this argument. On

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<sup>258</sup>Moran, “The Scandal of the ‘Great Sin’ at Ugarit,” 281.

the contrary, the argument that the “great sin” was adultery has tended to personalize the conflict. Casting the daughter of the Great Lady as an adulteress foreclosed any investigation of her political status, her position in Amurru signaled by her title, and even the identity of the Great Lady herself.

Mario Liverani’s treatment of the texts in his *Storia di Ugarit* exemplifies how the charge of adultery served to draw even sharper lines of distinction between the two dossiers than Nougayrol did when he presented the texts. In somewhat circular reasoning, Nougayrol’s division of the texts into those that dealt with the Ugaritic succession and those that dealt with the punishment of the woman became grounds for seeing these texts as reflecting the actions and fates of two different women. The rhetorical structure of Liverani’s presentation of this division is almost poetic.

In realtà, tutto è diverso nelle due mogli di ‘Ammištamru: la colpa commessa, che per la “figlia della grande” è adulterio, per l’altra no, fino a prova contraria; la loro fine, che per l’una è la morte, per l’altra il semplice ripudio (e si prospetta l’eventualità che in future Utri-šarruma la faccia tornare a Ugarit come regina); lo svolgersi dei fatti, drammatico in un caso, pacifico nell’altro; le clausole finanziarie, che sono la separazione dei beni dei due coniugi in un caso, il pagamento di un “prezzo del sangue” nell’altro.<sup>259</sup>

The rhetorical structure of his argument posits differences that are not as distinct as they might first appear. Although the point of differentiation which Liverani presents first and foremost is that one woman committed adultery and the other did not, it is worth noting

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<sup>259</sup> Mario Liverani, *Storia di Ugarit nell’eta’ degli Archivi Politici*, Studi Semitici 6 (Rome: Centro di Studi Semitici, Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente, 1962) 108: “In fact, everything is different for the two wives of Ammistamru: the fault committed, which for the ‘daughter of the Great Lady’ is adultery, the other not, until finally proven otherwise; their end, which for the one is the death, for the other simple repudiation (and it seems the possibility that in the future Utrišarruma could return her to Ugarit as queen); the unfolding of events, dramatic in one case, in the other peaceful; in financial terms, which in one case is the division of property of the two spouses, in the other, the payment of ‘blood money.’”

that he still allows for the fact that the daughter of Bentešina's offense could in the future also be proven to be adultery. Furthermore, his characterization of the daughter of Bentešina's case as unfolding peacefully belies the high stakes of the threat of an overthrown succession and Hittite intervention in RS 17.159. Repudiation of the representative of another kingdom and the threat of repudiation of a successor within a royal household is hardly simple. Finally, Liverani's highlighting of the payment of blood money in the second dossier brings up a crucial issue.

Although Liverani cites Moran's argument on the basis of biblical parallels that the "great sin" is adultery, like Moran, his argument is inherently based on the assumption that because death is the penalty for adultery and the punishment of the daughter of the Great Lady is death, then she most likely committed adultery. In support of this argument he refers to ancient Near Eastern legal codes that stipulate the death penalty for an adulteress.<sup>260</sup> He goes further and indicates that the clause in some of these statutes that a husband may offer his wife a reprieve from the death penalty explains the basis upon which the daughter of the Great Lady's brother, Šaušgamuwa attempted to persuade Ammistamru II to let her live, albeit under surveillance, in Amurru.<sup>261</sup> Yet an important point that Liverani does not raise is that none of these statutes stipulates the payment of blood money by the husband to the family of his wife should he decide to kill her. This feature of the case in the second dossier is one negotiated at length in all the accords concerning the woman's capital punishment. Ammistamru II's payment to

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid, 108 n. 37. See also Raymond Westbrook, "Adultery in Ancient Near Eastern Law," *Revue Biblique* 97 (1990): 542-80.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid, 108 n. 38.

Šaušgamuwa suggests that the conflict goes beyond a standard scenario of adultery and the death penalty.

Liverani identifies Ammistamru II's payment of to the woman's brothers as "blood money," but he does not explore its significance. His investigation of the political negotiations involved in the conflict does not extend beyond those implied by the statues that concern adultery. He posits that the ability for a husband to offer a reprieve of the death penalty might account for negotiations between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa prior to the woman's death, but he does not pursue further how the specific agreements arrived at in the accords following her death might bear on his assumption of adultery or the political significance of the case. The substantial sum Ammistamru II pays to Šaušgamuwa in exchange for his sister's life undercuts the sense that the death penalty was inevitable in this case. Furthermore, the payment indicates that the conflict extended beyond the fate of a single woman, implicating a broader network of political figures. The fact that some of these actors, the "sons of the Great Lady," are identified in the same terms as the woman begs the question of what this identification meant and how the status it implied might have shaped the nature and stakes of the conflict. In essence, because Liverani looks to the crime to distinguish the identity of the woman, he overlooks how the identity of the woman distinguished the crime.

Cord Kühne was the first scholar to treat the title "daughter of the Great Lady" itself as a datum for understanding the conflict.<sup>262</sup> His shift in analysis was propelled by Loren Fisher's publication of the text RS 1957.1, a Hittite verdict from Karkamiš that had

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<sup>262</sup> Kühne, "Ammistamru und die Tochter der 'Grossen Dame'," 175-184.

been taken illicitly from the excavations at Ras Shamra and put onto the antiquities market.<sup>263</sup> The opening lines of the verdict list the full set of titles that appear in both dossiers, the daughter of the Great Lady, the wife of Ammistamru II, the daughter of Bentešina, king of Amurru.

*Ammistamri šar Ugarit <sup>f</sup>bī-it-ta (or: <sup>f</sup>pī-id-dá) rabīti  
aššassu mārāt Bentešina (DUMU.MUNUS <sup>1</sup>ZAG. ŠEŠ) šar Amurru  
ištu bītīšu mātīšu itabakši  
u ina Amurri uttērši*

Ammistamru, king of Ugarit, drove the daughter of the Great Lady,  
his wife, daughter of Bentešina king of Amurru,  
away from his house and his country,  
and he returned her to Amurru.  
(RS 1957.1: 6-10)

This transliteration <sup>f</sup>bī-it-ta rabīti and its translation as “the daughter of the Great Lady” are an interpretation of the text worked out by Kühne in opposition to Fisher’s reading of the phrase in his *editio princeps*.<sup>264</sup> The interpretation of this phrase in the opening lines of the text is crucial to the interpretation of the text in itself and to understanding the entire case as it is attested in Nougayrol’s two dossiers. While Kühne rendered the critical phrase as <sup>f</sup>bī-it-ta ra-bi-ti, Fisher rendered it <sup>f</sup>pī-id-dá ra-bi-ti. The second element, ra-bi-ti, rabīti, is the same word that appears in all the texts in Nougayrol’s second dossier and has been universally understood as a title, “the Great Lady.” The problem is with the term that precedes it. The first syllable can be read as pī or bī, the second as id or it/iṭ, and the third as dá or ta/ṭa. In addition to the possible reading of the syllables, two factors

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<sup>263</sup> For the background on the discovery, acquisition, and publication of this tablet, see note 204 above. Loren R. Fisher, “Introduction,” in *The Claremont Ras Shamra Tablets*, 7-8.

<sup>264</sup> Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 177-179.

constituted a challenge to interpreters. The first is that whereas in previous texts the title *rabīti* was preceded by the logogram DUMU.MUNUS, (Akkadian, *mārat*) meaning “daughter,” here *rabīti* is preceded by the three syllabograms, *pí/bí*, *id/it*, and *dá/ta*. The second crucial difference is that rather than marking the title *rabīti*, the feminine determinative marks the preceding syllables. Fisher interpreted the shift in the placement of the determinative as marking the syllabograms as a proper name, which he transliterated, <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-dá*, and normalized as Pidda.

Fisher’s transliteration and interpretation were not without precedence. The same sequence of the feminine determinative followed by these syllabograms appears in the fragmentary text RS 17.368, albeit that third syllabogram is broken. Nougayrol also took these signs as indicating a proper name and transliterated them, <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-[dá]* (RS 17.368: verso, 5’). The text is fragmentary but it clearly concerns the succession in Ugarit, Ammistamru II, Šaušgamuwa, and their sons. The term <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-[dá]* is in construct with the word “sons,” DUMU.MEŠ. The only other term that identifies a woman is the logogram NIN (*aḫāt-*), which appears to be in construct with a word that has been lost. As this line immediately follows one in which Šaušgamuwa is mentioned, the interpretation is that the missing signs are Šaušgamuwa’s name. The woman in the text, then, is most reasonably identified as the sister of Šaušgamuwa, the wife of Ammistamru II, and the mother of the sons whose right to succession as king of Ugarit is arbitrated by the tablet. As discussed above, because of its concern with the succession, Nougayrol placed this

text in the first dossier, the one concerning the divorce of the “daughter of Bentešina.”<sup>265</sup>

He concludes that <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-[dá-]* identifies the name of the daughter of Bentešina as Pidda or Piddaya. What this means is that Nougayrol assumed that had the identification “daughter of Bentešina” appeared in the text it would have been in apposition to the proper name:

<sup>f</sup>*pí-id-dá* DUMU.MUNUS <sup>1</sup>ZAG.ŠEŠ or, had the text been assigned to the second dossier, it would have been <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-dá* DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*ra-bi-ti*.

While Fisher follows Nougayrol in transliterating the signs as <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-dá* and construing them as the proper name Pidda, his interpretation differs in a fundamental respect from Nougayrol. Because the logogram DUMU.MUNUS does not precede the title *rabīti* in RS 1957.1, Fisher cannot read the name Pidda in apposition to DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*ra-bi-ti*. He must either read Pidda as being in apposition to the title *rabīti* or as designating another woman alongside the Great Lady, and both options would be difficult concerning the fact that *rabīti* is in the genitive case. In both cases, the “Great Lady” herself would have to be included in the text as a subject of the verdict. Fisher’s reading of <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-dá* as a proper name thus forces an interpretation of the syntax of the sentence that has serious consequences for the meaning of the text as a whole and the identification of the persons involved in the conflict. The words <sup>f</sup>*pí-id-dá rabīti* are followed by the familiar terms, “his wife, the daughter of Bentešina, king of Amurru; *aššassu mārat Bentešina* (DUMU.MUNUS <sup>1</sup>ZAG.ŠEŠ) *šar Amurru*”(RS 1957.1: 7).

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<sup>265</sup> Nougayrol, PRU IV: 125. Nougayrol does allow that the text could also deal with the succession of the sons of the “daughter of the Great Lady” and not the “daughter of Bentešina.” But in either case, he reads <sup>f</sup>*pi-id-[da]* or <sup>f</sup>*pi-id-[da-ya]* as being a proper name.



Thus Fisher is left with a proper name and a string of titles that must be reconciled:

“Piddu, the Great Lady, his wife, the daughter of Bentešina.”

Fisher’s interpretation of this sequence of titles constitutes a revision of the meaning of the title “Great Lady” as it had been established in all other existing texts in the collection. His translation is as follows.

Ammistamru, king of Ugarit  
drove out Piddu, the Great Lady,  
his wife, daughter of Bentešina,  
king of Amurru  
from his house (and) his land  
and to Amurru he returned her.  
And Šaušgamuwa,  
king of Amurru, drove out Piddu,  
the Great Lady, his sister  
from his palace of Amurru;  
in another city he placed her.  
(RS 1957.1: 6-12)

Fisher’s interpretation, which underlies this translation, is that the proper noun “Piddu” and all the titles refer to the same woman: Piddu is the wife of Ammistamru II, the daughter of Bentešina, and the sister of Šaušgamuwa. So far, other than the revelation of the proper name, the equation is in line with the evidence of the known texts. The woman whom Ammistamru II married was the daughter of Bentešina and thus the sister of Šaušgamuwa. What is radically new is that the title the “Great Lady” is equated with these three other kinship titles. The Great Lady is the wife of Ammistamru II, the daughter of Bentešina, and the sister of Šaušgamuwa. This means the subject of Nougayrol’s second dossier, “the daughter of the Great Lady,” is not the wife of Ammistamru but his daughter. This interpretation contradicts every previous

understanding of the texts concerning “the daughter of the Great Lady” and requires an entirely new formulation of the events to which the texts attest.

According to Fisher’s interpretation, then, Ammistamru II was married to a royal woman from Amurru who was both the daughter of Bentešina and the sister of Šaušgamuwa. Her name was Piddu and she carried the title “Great Lady.” Divorced by Ammistamru II and exiled from Ugarit back to her home in Amurru, Piddu took her daughter with her. The verdict RS 1957.1 secured her safety by prohibiting her from being returned to Ugarit. This was not true for her daughter. Because Ammistamru II could not lay hands on his repudiated wife to punish her further, he extracted vengeance on their daughter. Šaušgamuwa agreed to return the daughter of his sister and Ammistamru II to Ugarit. After paying compensation to Šaušgamuwa, Ammistamru II then killed his daughter. Aside from its questionable plausibility, such a scenario requires an interpretation of the initial imperial legal verdicts that does not bear scrutiny, as well as an idiosyncratic reading of the syntax of the accords between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa.

The argument that Ammistamru II’s wife took a daughter with her when she returned to Amurru contradicts one of the primary stipulations of her divorce. While the initial imperial verdict RS 17.159 allows for the possibility that the heir Utrišarruma might choose to follow his mother back to Amurru, the verdict clearly states that all of the other children, the woman’s sons and daughters and son-in-laws, belong to Ammistamru II and that their mother may not pursue any claims on them (RS 17.159: 43-50). In this situation it is hardly likely that she would have been able to take a daughter

with her to Amurru. The problem is compounded by the fact that if Ammistamru II's wife is the Great Lady, then the sons of the Great Lady are also the sons of Ammistamru II. This means that she would have violated the stipulations in RS 17.159 by taking both her daughter as well as several of Ammistamru II's sons from Ugarit. Furthermore, the sons of the Great Lady are included in the final Hittite verdict RS 17.082 and the accord RS 17.318-17.349 as claimants in the case alongside Šaušgamuwa who demand compensation from Ammistamru II. This would imply that they were no longer in Ugarit or under the authority of their father and that they had acquired enough independent power to challenge him in an imperial court. If the verdict RS 17.159 stipulated that the Hittite Great King would intervene in order to prevent the heir to the throne of Ugarit from going against his father's wishes, then it is hard to imagine such insubordination being tolerated on the part of Ammistamru II's other sons within an imperial court.

The argument that Ammistamru II's daughter and not his wife is handed over to him by Šaušgamuwa is further suspect as it contradicts the rhetorical thrust of the accords between the two kings and inserts a rupture in the basic syntax of the speeches (RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360 A, and RS 17.318-RS 17.349). The rhetorical gesture which structures these accords is Šaušgamuwa's protest again continuing to guard Ammistamru's wife and his giving over of "that woman" to Ammistamru II. The building blocks of the speeches are the layered terms of identification for the woman who is the focal point of the dispute.

*mā anummê mārāt rabīti aššatuka  
ša hīta rabâ tētapaš ana kâša  
u anāku adi immati ašbāku  
u anaššar bēlet hītika*

*annumamê mārat rabīti belet hitika  
leqēša u atta  
kī libbaka epušša  
šumma libbaka u dīkša  
u šumma libbaka  
ina libbi tâmti kururša  
u šumma kī libbaka epuš mārat rabīti*

Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, your wife  
who has committed a great crime against you.  
Now, as for me, how long should I sit  
and guard your malefactress?  
Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, your malefactress,  
take her and you,  
do with her as you will.  
If you wish, kill her.  
or if you wish,  
throw her into the middle of the sea.  
Whatever you wish, do it to the daughter of the Great Lady.  
(RS 17.228: 1-15)

The rhetorical thrust of this speech, which is consistent across the accords, is formed by the presentation of a woman, the objection against protecting a woman, and the insistence that Ammistamru II take the woman. Fisher's claim that the innocent daughter, not his wife, is offered to Ammistamru II breaks the logic of the speech and interrupts the syntax of the lines. The woman whom Šaušgamuwa objects to protecting is clearly the one who has committed the crime, Ammistamru II's wife: "*u anāku adi immati ašbāku u anaššar bēlet hitika*, Now, as for me, how long should I sit and guard your malefactress?" Fisher's reading would require that this rhetorical question would have no logical connection to the phrases that precede and follow it. The speech would read along these lines: "Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, (the daughter of) your wife who has committed a crime against you. How long should I guard the woman who

had committed a crime against you? Take the daughter of the Great Lady, (the daughter of) the woman who has committed a crime against you.” This disjunction of the logic of the speech is caused by a disjunction at the level of the syntax of the sentence. In order to distinguish both a daughter and a mother as the subject these lines, the daughter of the Great Lady and the Great Lady, Fisher must essentially split the construct phrase “daughter of the Great Lady” and read the terms “your wife,” “your malefactress,” and even the relative clause “who has committed a great crime against you” as modifying the second term of the phrase. While he acknowledges that such a reading is unusual, Fisher argues, “I say that in the case of the Great Lady the relative (clause) refers to the Great Lady, namely Piddu.”<sup>266</sup>

Fisher’s reconfiguration of the syntax and meaning of these speeches, and with them the events of the case, is due to the fact that he does not recognize the construct phrase in RS 1957.1. He could not allow the entire construct phrase “daughter of the Great Lady, *mārat rabīti*” to be in apposition to “your wife” and “your malefactress” in the accords between the kings because he did not recognize that the term *rabīti* in RS 1957.1 was also the final term of a construct phrase. He overlooked the clue in the consistent genitive case ending /i/ in the term *rabīti*, even when the syntax required the accusative. The consistent genitive inflection of *rabīti* indicates that, as in the accords between the kings, so in RS 1957.1, *rabīti* was the final term of a construct phrase. In his review of Fisher’s work, Nougayrol points out this crucial oversight. Nougayrol argues that if one takes, as Fisher suggested, the first term in the series as the proper name Pidda

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<sup>266</sup> Fisher, “Introduction,” 18.

and the title *rabīti* is in apposition to it and to the following titles, “his wife,” “daughter of Bentešina,” then it is difficult to explain why the term is not inflected as *rabīta* when the syntax places the woman as the direct object of the verb, “to drive out.” Rather, Nougayrol states it is better to take the term *rabīti*, as it is in all other texts, and the second term of a construct phrase: “of the Great Lady” and not “the Great Lady.”<sup>267</sup> The problem then becomes not to reorganize the meaning and structure of all the other texts around the first term in the series but rather to reanalyze this term.

Nougayrol suggests that rather than taking the first term in the series as a proper noun in apposition to the title *rabīti*, the term should be taken as a common noun in construct with *rabīti*. As stated above, such an interpretation is consonant with the way *rabīti* functions in all the other texts; the difficulty is in how to render the word that Fisher transliterated *ḫpī-id-dá*. Nougayrol does this by making use of the dual phonetic possibilities for these signs and of a suggestion made by Cyrus Gordon with regard to the meaning of elements of feminine proper names at Ugarit. Gordon suggested that feminine proper names which are traditionally transliterated as starting with the syllable /*pi*/ such as the name of the first attested queen of Ugarit, Pišidqi, might rather be rendered with the value *bi*. In the case of Pišidqi, which is made up of the Semitic theophoric *šidqi*, “(personified) Righteousness,” this would add an additional West Semitic element, the

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<sup>267</sup>Nougayrol, RA 66 (1972): 90. “Si, avec L.R. Fisher, on traduit ‘Piddu, the Great Lady’ dans ces quatre passages, on ne peut expliquer . . . que les deux premiers ne portent pas ra-bi-ta. C’est donc, normalement, ‘de la Grande Dame,’ et non ‘la Grande Dame,’ qu’il faudrait comprendre partout.”

feminine marker *bi(tt-)*, “daughter of righteousness.”<sup>268</sup> Likewise in RS 1957.1, in an Akkadian text, it would not be improbable to find the West Semitic *bittu* “daughter,” rendered in the syllabograms *bi-it-ta* in construct with *rabīti*, rather than the more frequently used logograms DUMU.MUNUS, usually rendered as the Akkadian *mārat-*. Thus, in RS 1957.1, we simply have a West Semitic hybrid version of “daughter of the Great Lady” in apposition to “Ammistamru’s wife” and “Šaušgamuwa’s sister” as it is in all the other texts associated with the case. The profound impact of this interpretation is that, in RS 1957.1, not only is “*bittu rabīti*,” the daughter of the Great Lady, in apposition to “Ammistamru’s wife” and “Šaušgamuwa’s sister,” but it is also in apposition to “the daughter of Bentešina.” The two terms that had previously been used to designate two different women attested in two different text collections requires would thus refer to the same woman. The two “dossiers” would thus be joined as two phases of a conflict concerning a single inter-dynastic marriage. Nougayrol had left this as a possibility in the *editio princeps*, and in light of this interpretation of RS 1957.1 he affirms it.

Cord Kühne’s article, published in the following year, was pivotal in advancing the analysis of RS 1957.1 as a key to understanding the text collection and the larger scope of the political context in which the conflict took place.<sup>269</sup> Kühne’s fundamental contribution was not so much that he established the common identity of the “daughter of the Great Lady” and the “daughter of Bentešina” and united the two “dossiers,” which

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<sup>268</sup> C.H. Gordon, “Observations on the Akkadian Tablets from Ugarit,” *Revue Assyriologie* 50 (1956): 129. In Gordon’s analysis the second syllable of *bittu*, the */t-/*, would simply be assimilated into the following emphatic consonant */š/*.

<sup>269</sup> Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 175-184.

Nougayrol had already done in his review of Fisher's work, but that he took the title "Great Lady" as a datum in itself and correlated it to known documents outside the texts in the dossiers, i.e. the treaty between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina. The problem with previous scholarship was not the limitations of the data but the limitations of the analytical perspective. Before Kühne's work interpreters did not consider the possibility that a title that identified a royal woman by the status of another royal woman might reveal information about the larger inter-regional system.

Kühne begins by carefully reviewing Fisher's interpretation of RS 1957.1 and of the sequence of events of the case. The first objection Kühne raises to Fisher's reconstruction is that Ammistamru II's had prohibited his wife from taking her children with her in exile, aside from the heir Utrišarruma who was given the option of following his mother.<sup>270</sup> Kühne also argues that the fragmentary text RS 17.348, which appears to dictate stipulations concerning the Ugaritic succession, provided that Ammistamru II might appoint other sons of his divorced wife as king, thus indicating that these sons had remained in Ugarit. Kühne maintains that the accords between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II, which arbitrate the extradition of the daughter of the Great Lady, make it clear that the person Ammistamru II sought was his wife, who had committed the crime. In sum, Kühne argues that the other texts in the collection contradict the assumptions in Fisher's reconstruction. Kühne also discusses the grammatical issues raised by Nougayrol. The consistent marking of the title *rabīti* in the genitive while the first term, Fisher's *pi-id-dá*, is inflected in the accusative and the genitive indicates that the phrase is

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid 176.



not appositional but rather a construct phrase.<sup>271</sup> Kühne then concludes on the basis of the other texts in the case and these grammatical considerations that rather than a proper name and title, Piddu, the Great Lady, the phrase should be read, *bittu rabīti*, daughter of the Great Lady, a West Semitic-Akkadian hybrid of what is rendered in other text by the logograms DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*ra-bi-ti*.

Kühne's major contribution is the contextual basis on which he determines the identity of the woman and the fact that he treats her titles as historical data. He investigates possible scenarios that might have motivated the use of different circumlocutions for the woman as the case progressed.<sup>272</sup> The salient question he arrives at is why, although various designations of family relationship are used to identify the woman over the course of the case, is she defined almost exclusively by her relationship to her mother in the final stages of the case. Kühne conjectures that the decline in the use of terms that would associate the woman with her male kinsmen was motivated by the desire for each king to distance himself from the political consequences of her actions. In the initial texts stipulating the terms of the divorce, whether he was alive or not at the time, Bentešina's name would have been used to identify her because he would have been

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<sup>271</sup> Kühne marshals further examples of this kind of declined construct phrase in Akkadian texts from Nuzi, Ḫatti, and Amurru, among others. See Kühne, "Ammistamru und die Tochter der 'Grossen Dame'," 177, n. 24. He also offers examples of the use of *bittu* as an element in personal names at Alalah and Ugarit. Kühne speculates that the reason the Hittite-trained scribe at Karkamiš transliterates this element of the name rather than the logograms is that he simply does not recognize the West Semitic word *bittu*. This speculation can be countered by the fact that the logograms DUMU.MUNUS do appear in the Hittite verdict RS 17.082, although the assumption of the possibility of a range of individual scribal behavior certainly is warranted.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid 178-9. He first sketches out this progression in the use of circumlocutions. Kühne notes that the texts prior to RS 1957.1 are less detailed and use only one or two designations of relationship to identify the woman. He argues that once Ammistamru II is given free reign in designating the succession, as suggested by the fragmentary text RS 17.348, she is designated as the daughter of the Great Lady and the sister of Šaušgamuwa.

the one who set up the marriage and dowry arrangements. As the case progressed, Kühne suggests that Bentešina's name was no longer used either because he was no longer living or because of an effort to depoliticize the case.<sup>273</sup> Kühne's hypothesis here is telling. He assumes that to implicate male rulers in the conflict by identifying the woman in relationship to them was to raise the political stakes of the case. Although Kühne goes on to investigate the political position of the Great Lady and its consequences, traces remain here of the assumption that runs through the scholarship that association with male rulers establishes a political dimension to the case in a way that association with a royal woman, no matter how superlatively identified, does not.

To his credit, Kühne sets this consideration aside and moves on to the crucial fact that, in the later texts, associating the woman with her mother, identifying her as the "daughter of the Great Lady," was sufficient to designate her identity and status, constituting perhaps an even more refined designation than one that associated the woman with her father and brother. Kühne's explanation of why this might be so is couched in a discussion of the internal structure of a polygamous royal household. Assuming that, as was common for royal households in the ancient Near East, the Amurrite royal household was constituted by wives of higher and lower rank, the offspring of the king would also be differentiated by their mother's rank and to refer to them by their mother's rank was then to define their position in the royal household more

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid 179.

precisely.<sup>274</sup> Thus the rank of the mother was a more important identifier than simply the mother's name.

This observation propels Kühne to the most innovative aspect of his investigation. He takes the title "Great Lady" as a datum to be evaluated as a key to understanding the case. He systematically evaluates previous speculations as to its meaning. He begins with Nougayrol's initial suggestion that the term *rabītu* designates the rank of a wife standing in a secondary position to the queen. Although Kühne does not mention this as a reason for the fact that he considers this hypothesis to be a stretch, an obvious objection would be the improbability that the title "great" would apply to a secondary position.<sup>275</sup> The second possibility would be that *rabītu* is synonymous with "queen," but Kühne argues that such a case would make the title imprecise since, even if she were alive at the time of the case, her husband Bentešina certainly was not. However, if one takes into account the example of Ugarit, such a situation is not a problem. As discussed in Chapters One and Two, in Ugarit queens who survived their husbands continued to be designated as queens into the reigns of their sons. The third option Kühne raises is that *rabītu* signified the position of the queen mother. He notes that this option would require proving that Ammistamru II's divorced wife and Šaušgamuwa were children of the same mother, which Kühne then proceeds to do.

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid 180.

<sup>275</sup> However once Kühne has made his case on other textual grounds that the Great Lady is Gaššuliyawiya, he notes that a satisfying corollary is that such an identification fits the sense of the title "great": If there is no good reason to consider Sausgamuwa and the daughter of the Great Lady whom he defended with considerable effort as children of different mothers, then the interpretation *rabītu* as 'Queen Mother,' which emerges in the situation apparent from the texts and in the top rank and age-oriented meaning of the word, appear correct in the most appealing way"(Ibid 181).

Kühne adroitly marshals the evidence that Šaušgamuwa's mother was the Great Lady by analyzing the function of the title "sons of the Great Lady" as it refers to a contingent within the royal household. Kühne argues that this designation, rather than indicating that these men were the half-brothers to Šaušgamuwa as Nougayrol argued,<sup>276</sup> identifies them as his full brothers, the sons of the king and queen. In reviewing the texts in which these men are designated as brothers of the woman and sons of the Great Lady, Kühne argues that in fact such a designation would have tied them more closely to Šaušgamuwa. Given the context of a polygamous royal household in which all the royal offspring would have been paternal half-brothers or sisters the only way to specify the status of a full brother or sister of Šaušgamuwa would be through their maternal affiliation. The premise of the texts that stipulate Ammistamru II's payment of compensation to Šaušgamuwa and the "sons of the Great Lady" is that they all as a group sustained a common loss by her death. Kühne argues that in this regard Šaušgamuwa would have functioned not simply as the king of Amurru, but as a representative of the contingent of the royal household that shared the distinction of being the offspring of both the king and the queen.<sup>277</sup> While the alliance formed by this shared prestige might have remained implicit in normal circumstances, a crisis that precipitated legal action required that all parties be named explicitly. Thus Šaušgamuwa's maternal brothers are named alongside him as claimants in the legal verdicts that stipulate the compensation Ammistamru II must pay in return for the life of their sister.

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<sup>276</sup> PRU IV 131.

<sup>277</sup> Kühne, "Ammistamru und die Tochter der 'Grossen Dame'," 181.

Kühne's ultimate goal in arguing that the members of the royal family involved in the case were all full siblings, the offspring of both the king and the Great Lady, is to establish the Great Lady's identity. On this point, Kühne makes his most important interpretive move. Previous scholars, if they considered the significance of the title *rabitu* at all, did so only in the context of conjectures concerning the structure of the Amurrite royal household and the position of the Great Lady within it, as seen in the hypotheses discussed above. Kühne, however, makes use of established external evidence on the structure of the Amurrite royal household. The strongest evidence for the internal structure of the royal household of Amurru in this period comes from the treaty between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina. As was standard practice in Hittite vassal treaties, the terms of the alliance between the Hittite Great King Ḫattušili III and the vassal king Bentešina was embodied in a marriage between Bentešina and Gaššuliyawiya, the daughter of Ḫattušili III. The primary provision of the marriage was the political position Gaššuliyawiya was to have in Amurru. She was to be queen, first among all other royal wives, and her descendants were to be the heirs to the throne. In this way, all future kings of Amurru would be descendants of Ḫattušili III. Thus Šaušgamuwa, Bentešina's successor and reigning king of Amurru, had to have been the son of Gaššuliyawiya. If Kühne could prove that Šaušgamuwa's mother was the Great Lady, then the Great Lady's identity as Gaššuliyawiya would be confirmed.

Although Kühne allows for a potential scenario in which Gaššuliyawiya may have born no sons and thus Šaušgamuwa was the son of a secondary wife, this scenario seems unlikely. Marriages between imperial daughters and vassal kings and the concomitant

Hittite control over the royal succession, were central to the means by which the Hittite Great Kings exercised control over their vassals. Had Gaššuliyawiya not produced sons, it is more likely that another marriage from the Hittite imperial family would have been arranged with Bentešina rather than having the son of a non-Hittite royal woman become king. In the next section I will present an overview of the Hittite policy of vassal marriages. The previous chapter discussed the particular case of the vassal treaty between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina in the context of Hittite rule in Syria during the “Pax Hethitica” following the Battle of Qadeš. Considering the case of the marriage between Gaššuliyawiya and Bentešina in light of other vassal marriages allows us to see what the fate of their daughter would have meant for Hittite rule in Syria.

## **HITTITE VASSAL MARRIAGES AS IMPERIAL STRATEGY**

Treaties that established the sovereignty of Hittite Great Kings consistently stipulated marriages between the rulers of subjugated territories and the daughters or sisters of the Great King. Franco Pintore presents a survey of these treaties in his study of interdynastic marriage in the Late Bronze Age.<sup>278</sup> He notes that while there is scarce documentation of Hittite kings marrying foreign women, the documentation for the marriages of Hittite royal women with vassal kings is abundant, dating from the mid 14<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century, from the reigns of Šuppiluliuma I, Muwatilli, Ḫattušili III, and

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<sup>278</sup> Franco Pintore, *Il Matrimonio Interdinastico*, 71-75.

Tudḫaliya IV. He argues that these marriages represented the means by which Hittite kings sought to extend their power over subordinate kingdoms. In Pintore's estimation, Šuppiluliuma I's treaty with Huqqana of Hayaša is the earliest example of this strategy.<sup>279</sup> While Pintore does not explicitly identify the shared rhetorical features of these treaties, his presentation of the texts invites such an analysis. The treaties share a common shape whereby the ruler in question has come to the Hittite king for assistance, is reinstated as ruler in his kingdom, and his elevated status is manifested by his marriage to a daughter or sister of the Hittite king. The exclusive status of the Hittite king as overlord is mirrored in the exclusive status of the Hittite king's wife or sister as queen in the vassal kingdom.

The rhetoric of the treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Huqqana of Hayaša prefigures many of these features, which are found in later vassal treaties. Huqqana is depicted as having sought political support and protection from the Hittite king. He has consequently been elevated to a position of power by the Hittite king and his new status is manifested in a marriage to a Hittite royal woman, in this case Šuppiluliuma's sister. Of particular note the treaty indicates that all this has occurred in Ḫattuša, the capital of the Hittite kingdom, a phenomenon which recurs in the case of Bentešina of Amurru. The treaty of Huqqana opens, "Thus spoke his majesty, Šuppiluliuma, king of Hatti: I have now elevated you, Huqqana, a lowly dog, and have treated you well. In Ḫattuša I have distinguished you among the men of Hayaša and given you my sister in marriage."<sup>280</sup> The rhetoric of this opening passage suggests that the marriage to the Hittite woman is both a

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid 71.

<sup>280</sup> CTH 42, Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 27.

symbol and a means of Huqqana's elevation among his countrymen. The political significance of the marriage is further conveyed in the stipulations concerning the position the Hittite woman will have in the household of the subordinate king. She will be second to none. Any previous wife will lose her status as such. Huqqana may take no other woman as a wife or even a sexual partner besides Šuppiluliuma I's sister.<sup>281</sup> The exclusivity of the Hittite king's position as Huqqana's sole overlord is mirrored in the exclusivity of Šuppiluliuma I's sister position as Huqqana's sole wife.

The next imperial marriage alliance that Pintore considers is the marriage between the daughter of Šuppiluliuma I and Šattiwaza, king of Mittani. This treaty is the foundational treaty for Hittite hegemony in Syria. The historical preamble of the treaty is a narrative of Šuppiluliuma I's conquests in Syria. This narrative includes the common depiction of the vassal ruler as a fugitive from his own country who has called upon the Hittite Great King for protection. In this case, the political conflict detailed in the treaty is on a much greater scale than the one in Hayaša, involving a series of conflicts that precipitated Šuppiluliuma I's advance against the lands under the control of Mittani. The larger stakes of Šuppiluliuma I's conquest in Mittani was the struggle between Hatti and Assyria for control of the region. This dynamic, in which military action in Syria is correlated with a larger interregional conflict, appears again in the later case of Bentešina

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<sup>281</sup> "Hereafter you shall not take a woman from the land of Azzi as (an additional) wife. Divorce the one whom you have already taken. She shall legitimately be your concubine, but you shall not make her your wife" (Ibid 32). The fact that the language of queenship is used is likely a function of the fact that Huqqana himself is never called a king. The primacy of Šuppiluliuma's sister is expressed in her position of as Huqqana's only wife. As noted, this language corresponded to that which determines Šuppiluliuma I as sole overlord: "Now you, Huqanna, recognize only My Majesty as overlord" (Ibid 27).



of Amurru. In this case, the ultimate stakes of the conflict in Amurru is the competition between Hatti and Egypt for control of the region.

In the case of Mittani, Šuppiluliuma initially sought to exert control by unseating Tušratta, king of Mittani, and supporting a rival line of rulers in Mittani. However, when these rulers rebelled against Hittite control and made diplomatic overtures to Assyria, Šuppiluliuma I shifted his support to another claimant, Tušratta's son Šattiwaza who had fled Mittani after his father's murder. Again, we see the pattern of a ruler who flees to Hatti seeking protection and is then elevated by the Hittite king and returned as a ruler of the kingdom from which he has fled. The elevation of the suppliant ruler is likewise effected through an imperial-vassal marriage. The terms of the marriage, which stipulate that Šuppiluliuma I's daughter will be second to none, echo the stipulations of the treaty with Huqqana: "Concubines will allowed for you, Šattiwaza, but no other woman shall be greater than my daughter. You shall allow no other woman to be her equal, and no one shall sit as an equal beside her. You shall not degrade my daughter to the second rank."<sup>282</sup> However, the treaty with Šattiwaza goes beyond the stipulations of the Huqqana treaty in terms of its political scale and the terminology for the position of Šuppiluliuma I's daughter. Unlike Hayaša, Mittani was a territorial state whose rulers had been Great Kings, of equal standing with the rulers of Hatti and Assyria. Thus the position to which Tušratta is elevated is kingship and, accordingly, the position of Šuppiluliuma I's daughter is not simply that of a primary wife but queen.

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<sup>282</sup> CTH 51. Ibid 44.

I have taken up Šattiwaza, son of king Tušratta, in my hand, I will seat him upon the throne of his father, so that the land of Mittani, the great land, does not go to ruin. I, Great King, king of Hatti, have given life to the land of Mittani for the sake of my daughter. I took up Šattiwaza, son of king Tušratta, in my hand and I gave him a daughter in marriage. Prince Šattiwaza shall be king in the land of Mittani and the daughter of the king of Hatti shall be queen.<sup>283</sup>

The language of this passage is significant. In a parallel formula, the installation of Šattiwaza as king and Šuppiluliuma I's daughter as queen restores the land of Mittani. The claim that Mittani is brought back to life for the sake of Šuppiluliuma I's daughter indicates that her queenship is more than the marker of a political alliance between two men; rather her position as queen is the means and even the motivation for the revivification of the entire polity of Mittani. The treaty protects her future status as queen just as it protects Šattiwaza and his descendants' status as king. The final clause of the treaty indicates that these future kings of Mittani will be the sons and grandsons of Šuppiluliuma's daughter. Taken together, the wording of these stipulations suggest that Šuppiluliuma's daughter is central to the transformations by Mittani is "brought to life" as a vassal kingdom.

Pintore presents a series of subsequent vassal treaties in which Hittite daughters and sisters are married to rulers who are restored to power by Hittite kings. The treaty between the Hittite Great King Muṣili II and Kupanta-Kurunta records in its historical preamble the marriage between another daughter of Šuppiluliuma I and Mašuiluwa, a previous ruler in the region of Arzawa (CTH 68). The depiction of the history of the alliance between Šuppiluliuma I and Mašuiluwa follows the pattern of the alliances

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

discussed above. Mašuiluwa fled to the Hittite king Šuppiluliuma I, Muršili II's father, for protection and is elevated and given Šuppiluliuma I's daughter, Muwatti, in marriage.

The statement that Muwatti was Kupanta-Kurunta's mother is interjected into this historical prologue. However, the later portions of the treaty indicate that Kupanta-Kurunta was not Mašuiluwa's son by descent but by political election. Having no son of his own Mašuiluwa adopted his nephew Kupanta-Kurunta as heir.<sup>284</sup> The Hittite princess Muwatti was thus Kupanta-Kurunta's mother only by virtue of the fact that her husband had adopted him as his heir. This makes it all the more significant that the terms by which Kupanta-Kurunta is first identified are in reference to the Hittite woman, not his adoptive father. The assertion of this association suggests that from the Hittite perspective, Kupanta-Kurunta's political claims are in no small part supported by his connection to Muwatti. Indeed, as his adoptive father eventually revolted against the Hittites, his association with Šuppiluliuma I's daughter Muwatti was likely the more mutually advantageous one to mention at the outset of the treaty.<sup>285</sup>

The subsequent imperial-vassal marriage alliances that Pintore presents are minor notices in two subsequent treaties.<sup>286</sup> The most significant attested marriage alliance subsequent to those discussed above is the one between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina of Amurru. The vassal alliance with Amurru which Ḫattušili III established with Bentešina

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<sup>284</sup> CTH 68. Ibid 74.

<sup>285</sup> A further indication of the centrality of Muwatti in the Hittite perspective is that when Muršili II recounts his support of Mašuiluwa, Muwatti is included. The treaty states that Muršili II made neighboring polities swear an oath to Mašuiluwa, Muwatti, and Kupanta-Kurunta (Ibid 75).

<sup>286</sup> These are an alliance between the Hittite king Muwattalli II and Mašturi, the ruler of a land near the Shia river, alluded to in the treaty between Tudḫaliya IV and Šaušgamuwa (CTH 105) and a fragmentary notice in a letter from Hattuša (KUB XXI 40). See Pintore, *Il Matrimonio interdinastico*, 74.

was as strategically important for Hittite rule in Syria in the 13<sup>th</sup> century as the alliance that Šuppiluliuma I forged with Šattiwaza was to Hittite rule in Syria in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Under Šuppiluliuma I, the subjugated remnant of Mittani became a buffer region between Hatti and Assyria. Under Ḫattušili III and his heir Tudḫaliya IV Amurru was transformed into a defensive frontier and then hub of contact between Hatti and Egypt. The alliance Ḫattušili III forged with Bentešina was instrumental to his own consolidation of power within Hatti. Ḫattušili's elder brother, Muwattalli II, then the reigning king of Hatti, deposed Bentešina from kingship in Amurru when Bentešina broke his allegiance to Hatti and capitulated to the invading Egyptians prior to the battle of Qadeš. Muwattalli II brought Bentešina to Hatti as a prisoner, and Ḫattušili III gained supervision over Bentešina. The prologue of their treaty states that Ḫattušili III became Bentešina's protector. After the death of his brother Muwattalli II, Ḫattušili III took control away from his brother's son and successor, Uḫri-tešub, and made himself king in Hatti. Ḫattušili III then rewarded his loyal protégé by reinstating Bentešina as king in Amurru. Thus Ḫattušili III achieved several simultaneous ends. He established an important outpost for Hittite imperial control in Syria and, at the onset of a reign forged on the unsteady ground of civil war, he had placed a vassal with proven loyalty on this critical frontier.

The alliance between Hatti and Amurru was secured by the marriage of Ḫattušili III's daughter, Gaššuliyawiya, and Bentešina. As in previous imperial-vassal marriages, their treaty stipulated that Gaššuliyawiya would reign as queen of Amurru, second to none, and that her sons and the sons of her sons would be the heirs to the Amurrite

throne. Like the treaty of Šuppiluliuma I and Šattiwaza, the rhetoric of the treaty between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina positioned the vassal ruler as “a dead man” to whom the Hittite Great King gave life and returned to the throne of his father. This declaration of revivification is made directly subsequent to Ḫattušili giving his daughter Gaššuliyawiya to Bentešina as a wife.

[I have given] Princess Gaššuliyawiya to the land of Amurru, to the royal house, to Bentešina, [as] his wife. She now possesses queenship [in the land] of Amurru. In the future the son and grandson of my daughter shall [exercise] kingship in the land of Amurru. . . . No one shall take the kingship of the land of Amurru from Bentešina, or from the hand of his son or his grandson, the progeny of Bentešina and the progeny of my daughter. The son of Bentešina and his grandson, the progeny of Bentešina and the son of my daughter, shall hold the kingship in the land of Amurru.<sup>287</sup>

The language of this treaty makes even more explicit the fact that the Hittite woman becomes the conduit for the rule of her father in the vassal kingdom: “the son of *my daughter* shall hold kingship in Amurru.” The succession in Amurru thus becomes twice-fathered: future kings are not simply the offspring of Bentešina but the offspring of the Hittite Great King through the mediation of his daughter. Yet this conflation of father and daughter does not erase Gaššuliyawiya. On the contrary, her queenship makes her sons kings. The designated heirs of a vassal king were at one and the same time descendants of the local king and members of the imperial family through their mothers.

This dual lineage is expressed in the iconography of the royal seal of Bentešina’s heir Šaušgamuwa that was impressed on the verdicts concerning the daughter of the Great Lady. This seal is imprinted on all three of the accords issued from Amurru which

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<sup>287</sup> Treaty of Ḫattušili III and Bentešina (CTH 92). Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 101-102.

stipulate the terms of the final surrender of the daughter of the Great Lady (RS 17.228; RS 17.372A-17.360A; RS 17.318-17.349A; Ug. III, fig. 38-47). No other commentators before Kühne considered this iconography in their analysis of the texts. Yet, when seen against this long-term strategy of Hittite expansion through imperial-vassal marriages, the iconography of the seal becomes a crucial datum for unraveling the political relationships involved in the case and the meaning of the title “Great Lady.” The iconography of Šaušgamuwa’s seal indicates that he claimed his authority both from his position as Bentešina’s heir and from his affiliation with the Hittite imperial line.<sup>288</sup> The seal is inscribed with Hittite iconography and a hieroglyphic legend.<sup>289</sup> Although Šaušgamuwa is identified as king in the text of the tablets, the Hittite hieroglyphic legend identifies him as a prince. Itamar Singer argues that this is not a discrepancy in titles caused by the use of old seals but rather an indication of Šaušgamuwa’s dual status as the king of Amurru and the son of a Hittite princess and member of the imperial family.<sup>290</sup>

Singer’s reading of this iconography is part of his larger project of considering the verdicts from Ugarit in light of data from Hatti. The survey of the imperial-vassal marriages from Šuppiluliuma I to Ḫattušili III presented above indicates, as we have seen, that marriage alliances between vassal kings and the daughters or sisters of Hittite kings were key strategies of Hittite rule. As this was a regular practice, it makes sense

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<sup>288</sup> Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der ‘Grossen Dame’,” 182, n. 68.

<sup>289</sup> The use of this seal may also be seen as part of, or even a catalyst for, the wide-spread Hittite cultural influence in Amurru throughout Šaušgamuwa’s reign, which included the use of Hittite style stamp seals among elites outside the royal family. See Helft, *Patterns of Exchange/ Patterns of Power: A New Archaeology of the Hittite Empire*, 43-49.

<sup>290</sup> Singer, “Hittite Cultural Influence in Amurru,” 233. Šaušgamuwa would have held this position as “great son” or prince by virtue of his maternal descent from the Hittite line.

that a title might have existed for the royal daughters and sisters who were given in these alliances. Singer argues that such a title existed and that it was “DUMU.MUNUS GAL,” meaning “Great Daughter” or “Great Princess.”<sup>291</sup> Singer finds this title in Hittite sources, as well as reflexes of the title in non-Hittite sources that likewise identify Hittite royal women married to foreign kings. He argues that a primary instance of such an occurrence of the title in non-Hittite sources is found in the verdicts from Ugarit that concern the daughter of the Great Lady (DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*rabīti*). Singer suggests that the otherwise unattested Akkadian term <sup>f</sup>*rabīti* found in these texts is a “disguised Hittite royal title” corresponding to the logographic title DUMU.MUNUS GAL.<sup>292</sup> The term <sup>f</sup>*ra-bi-tu* is a substantive use of the feminine form of the adjective “great,” marked with the determinative signifying a feminine title or proper name. Singer argues that <sup>f</sup>*rabītu*, “Great (Lady),” reflects an abbreviated version of DUMU.MUNUS GAL, “Great Daughter” or “Great Princess.” In this case, the DUMU.MUNUS <sup>f</sup>*rabīti* of the Hittite verdicts from Ugarit would be “the daughter of the Great Daughter,” or the “DUMU.MUNUS DUMU.MUNUS GAL.”

In his survey of the occurrence of the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL in Hittite texts, Singer found that whenever it was associated with a woman whose identity was known, it referred to “daughters of the Great King of Hatti who were given in marriage to foreign monarchs and were expected to become principal consorts in their new lands.”<sup>293</sup> He also

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<sup>291</sup> Singer, “The Title ‘Great Princess’ in the Hittite Empire,” 332-333.

<sup>292</sup> Singer, “Hittite Cultural Influence in Amurru,” Ibid 233.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

found this to be a valid definition in cases in which the identity of the royal woman was not known.<sup>294</sup> Singer identifies cases of two known royal women who carried the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL: Kilušhepa and Gaššuliyawiya. In the case of Kilušhepa, the primary source for her title is found in two Hittite hieroglyphic seal impressions in which her name is associated with the title Great Daughter.<sup>295</sup> On the seal Kilušhepa is depicted standing at the side of a king whose name may read Ari-Šarruma, who Singer argues can be identified with Ari-Šarruma, the king of Išuwa, a southern Anatolian vassal king who is mentioned as a witness in the Ulmi-tešub treaty (CTH 106).<sup>296</sup> Appearances of Kilušhepa's names in cuneiform texts indicate that she was the daughter of Ḫattušili III and Puduhepa, given in marriage to the king of Išuwa.<sup>297</sup> As for Gaššuliyawiya, in addition to her appearance as the daughter of Ḫattušili III in the vassal treaty with Bentešina of Amurru, she appears in a prayer dated to the age of Puduhepa in which she is identified interchangeably by her name and the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL. Her name also appears in two oracle texts in which Ḫattušili III enquires as to whether she and two

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<sup>294</sup> In one of the case Singer proposes, the title is also found in Hittite sources to refer to the daughter of another Great King who married a Hittite king. Singer argues that Tudḫaliya IV's Babylonian spouse was identified with the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL. See Singer, "The Title 'Great Princess' in the Hittite Empire," 330-332).

<sup>295</sup> Ibid 327. Although he disagrees with Güterbock's interpretation of the title, Singer notes that Güterbock, following a suggestion made by Ph.H.J. Houwink ten Cate during the excavation of Korucutepe, first identified the hieroglyphic term with the cuneiform title DUMU.SAL GAL. See H.G. Güterbock, "Hittite Hieroglyphic Seal Impressions from Korucutepe," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 32 (1973): 137.

<sup>296</sup> Singer, "The Title 'Great Princess' in the Hittite Empire," 328.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.



other of his children are in danger. Finally, her name appears on her personal seal in which she is identified as PRINCESS in Hittite hieroglyphs.<sup>298</sup>

Singer also addresses the case of a Hittite princess whose name is not known but who married Ramses II. In her marriage inscription she is identified by an Egyptian title (*s3t*) *wrt* that translates, “Great (Daughter)” and then by the extended title, “the daughter of the Great (Lord) and/or the daughter of the Great (Lady) of Hatti”(*s3t p3 wr 3 m Ḫ3ty / s3t t3 wrt 3t n Ḫ3ty*).<sup>299</sup> Furthermore, Singer argues that a phrase identifying an Egyptian official on the Berlin stele of Ḫwy includes a similar title for this same Hittite princess. The official is identified as “the one who comes from Hatti bringing its Great (feminine *wrt*).” Singer reads this phrase as referring to the official’s role as the one who brought to Egypt the Hittite princess who became the wife of Ramses II.<sup>300</sup> Singer points out that the substantive use of the feminine form of the adjective, “great,” in the shortened designation on the stele of Ḫwy, “is conspicuously similar to the Akkadian title <sup>f</sup>*rabītu*,” as <sup>f</sup>*rabītu* is also a title based on the substantive use of the feminine form of the adjective “great.”<sup>301</sup> Furthermore, one may extend Singer’s observation by noting that for

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<sup>298</sup> Ibid 329. Distinguishing Gaššuliyawiya, daughter of Ḫattušili III, from her grandmother, the wife of Muršili II, is challenging as both women were named Gaššuliyawiya. However, Singer argues that in the case of the glyptic evidence this problem is eased by the fact that on seal impressions the elder Gaššuliyawiya appears at the side of Muršili II with the hieroglyphic title GREAT QUEEN, whereas the other seal impression that carries Gaššuliyawiya’s name identifies her as a princess, distinguishing the different titles which each woman would have carried. Furthermore, Singer notes that the prayer in which the name Gaššuliyawiya occurs interchangeably with the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL can be dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, that is in the period of Puduḫepa, on the basis of its ductus.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid 333-334. Singer brings in De Roos’ observation that the Egyptian title likely represents a word-by-word rendering of the Hittite title DUMU.MUNUS GAL. See J. De Roos, “Who was Kiluḫepa?” *Jaarbericht Ex Oriente Lux* 29 (1985-86): 81, n.60.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid 334.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

both women--Gaššuliyawiya and the Hittite bride of Ramses II-- both an abbreviated and an extended title is attested. The Hittite bride of Ramses II is identified with a title based on the substantive use of adjective “great” and by an extended title that identifies her as the daughter of the king and queen of Hatti. Likewise, Gaššuliyawiya is identified in Hittite sources as “Great Daughter” and in the texts from Ugarit with a title formed by the substantive use of adjective “great.”

In Singer’s analysis of the Hittite texts, Gaššuliyawiya, the daughter of Ḫattušili III and the wife of Bentešina, proves to be the historical figure in which the title DUMU.MUNUS GAL and the political position of being a Hittite royal woman given in marriage to a vassal king most clearly coincide. All the features of the cases presented above are at play in the case of Gaššuliyawiya: her political role, her identification in Hittite sources, and her identification in non-Hittite sources. As has been discussed with regard to her political role, Gaššuliyawiya is identified by name in the imperial-vassal treaty between her father, the Hittite Great King Ḫattušili III, and Bentešina, king of Amurru. The treaty designates her as the wife who will reign as queen in Amurru and whose offspring will be the royal heirs. As Singer has shown, Gaššuliyawiya is designated as DUMU.MUNUS GAL in Hittite sources. Furthermore, the term <sup>f</sup>*rabīti*, “Great (Lady),” which so closely corresponds to DUMU.MUNUS GAL, “Great Daughter,” is used to identify the mother of Bentešina’s daughter and sons. Taken together, these facts strongly suggest that DUMU.MUNUS GAL and <sup>f</sup>*rabīti* are equivalent terms and that Gaššuliyawiya was the “Great Lady” of these texts.

Thus when the title *rabīti*, “Great (Lady),” found in the texts from Ugarit is considered alongside sources that identify Hittite royal women given in imperial-vassal marriages from Anatolia to Egypt, we see that this title refers not to a singular woman but to a class of women who were central to the strategies of Hittite rule. Amurru participated in a common political arrangement by which the Hittites sought to extend their control and influence within the royal households of vassal kingdoms. What this means is that in divorcing, exiling, and striving to kill the daughter of the Great Lady, Ammistamru II was confronting not simply an individual woman. He was confronting an entire imperial political framework configured by the role that Hittite royal women and their descendants were expected to play in foreign courts. Furthermore, Ammistamru II strove to exert his will over the daughter of a Hittite princess within the very imperial judicial system which otherwise could have been expected to protect Hittite lineages in vassal kingdoms.

## CONCLUSION

For Kühne, the fact that Ammistamru II was able to exert his will over his wife, the daughter of the Great Lady, within the imperial judicial system was the sticking point for identifying the Great Lady as Gaššuliyawiya. How would it be possible that Tudḫaliya IV was prepared to let a king of Ugarit execute his niece?<sup>302</sup> While Kühne posits this as a potential objection to his historical reconstruction, I argue that it was the crux of the political problem that the case constituted. The fact that the daughter of the

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<sup>302</sup> Kühne, “Ammistamru und die Tochter der 'Grossen Dame',” 182.

Great Lady was the daughter of a Hittite royal woman is what made such lengthy arbitration within the imperial court necessary. The identification of Ammistamru II's repudiated wife as the daughter of Gaššuliyawiya does not constitute an interpretive problem; rather, it explains the proliferation of legal verdicts produced by negotiations held at every conceivable level. As we have seen, the corpus of texts associated with the case includes imperial verdicts addressed to the king of Ugarit alone (RS 17.159 and RS 17.396); imperial verdicts addressed to both the king of Ugarit and the king of Amurru (RS 1957.1, RS 18.06-RS 17.364, and RS 17.082); and accords between the kings of Ugarit and Amurru alone (RS 16.270, RS 17.228, RS 17.372-RS 17.360A, and RS 17.318-RS 17.349A). This extended arbitration was necessary because much more than the fate of a single woman was at stake. Indeed, in a political world structured by interdynastic and imperial-vassal marriages one might say that there was no such thing as the fate of a single woman. No royal woman could be divorced or executed without implicating the entire set of royal men and women to whom she was related. Certainly not one who represented the intersection of the political interests of Hatti, Amurru, and Ugarit as the daughter of the Great Lady did.

The objectives of interdynastic and imperial-vassal alliances were not limited to the immediate context in which they were established or to the rulers who were partners to the agreements. The ultimate goal of such alliances was to establish patterns of rule and political relationship that would extend across subsequent generations. Royal women were both the vehicles and the agents for accomplishing these goals. The marriage was only the first step in the political work that a royal woman was expected to do within her

new kingdom. A Hittite royal woman was expected not only to reproduce the next generation of rulers on a physical level. Her status as a member of the Hittite royal line was expected to determine the political status and imperial affiliation of her descendants. She and her offspring were the long-term manifestation of the alliance between the Hittite great king and the vassal ruler. The trajectory of the career of a royal woman—the terms on which her marriage was established, her success or failure in maintaining her queenship, the tenure of her sons and the status of her daughters—was indicative of the outcome of the agreements she had brokered. If the prestige of Hittite women within vassal kingdoms was an expression and extension of Hittite power, so too was the prestige of these women's descendants.

The legal texts that document the divorce of the daughter of the Great Lady offer a view as to how the ideal of imperial succession mediated through Hittite women stipulated in vassal treaties actually played out in subsequent generations. These texts offer a glimpse available nowhere else of the complex political realities that lay behind the idealization of a unitary line of authority extending from Hittite Great Kings through their daughters. Pending the discovery of further texts, we will never know what became of the Hittite women and their offspring who are documented in other vassal treaties. The verdicts from Ugarit, however, allow us to discern the political contingencies that shaped imperial rule in Syria in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. The lines of succession that Hittite treaties commanded within vassal kingdoms could become fractured within a regional political sphere. Tracing the fate of the daughter of the Great Lady reveals that the force and meaning of imperial lineage were ripe for negotiation when regional conflicts demanded

it. Royal women were not an inert medium of dynastic reproduction. They were political quicksilver whose rising and falling conveyed the shifting pressures of the systems they inhabited.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### “HER BROTHER MAY NOT SPEAK WITH HER”: EMBATTLED KINGSHIP

The previous chapter considered the imperial context of the divorce between Ammistamru II and the daughter of the Great Lady and the political implications of the daughter of the Great Lady's Hittite affiliation with which Ammistamru II had to contend. This chapter will address how Ammistamru II asserted his will within this context. While the initial divorce texts discussed in Chapter Two, RS 17.159 and RS 17.396, were verdicts addressed directly to Ammistamru II's wife, the legal negotiations as the case progressed were primarily between Ammistamru II and her brother Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru. What ultimately came to be at stake in this conflict was the power of each king to assert and defend the parameters of his royal household. Ammistamru II was not content to assert his will over his own household and kingdom. He also sought to assert his will over Šaušgamuwa's royal house. His goal was to displace the daughter of the Great Lady from her position both in Ugarit and in Amurru so that he could execute her with impunity. In order to do so, Ammistamru II had to extricate his wife from the network of relationships in which she was situated within Ugarit and Amurru.

The stipulations of the two imperial verdicts discussed in this chapter indicate that Šaušgamuwa initially resisted Ammistamru II's incursion into his sphere of authority. However, faced with a situation in which he could not keep his sister within his household, Šaušgamuwa countered his loss of authority by negating his affiliation with his sister. The accords between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa represent a process through which the regular means of forming interdynastic alliances were inverted. Rather

than an alliance between two royal men being forged by the generative transfer of a royal woman in a diplomatic marriage, the alliance between these men was renewed by sending a woman to her death.

The conflict and renewal of the alliance between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa sheds light on the expectations and internal structure of two royal households. The systematic process by which Ammistamru II displaced his wife from her positions both in Ugarit and in Amurru reveals the degree of inter-relationship between the status of women and men within royal households. Where women stood in relationship to men and where men stood in relationship to women was indicative of the balance of power in the system as a whole. By positioning a woman as being simultaneously a daughter, sister, wife, and mother, men asserted their relative positions as fathers, sons, and brothers. Patrimonial rule depended on the political polyvalence of women. The verdicts and accords in this case reveal that sons and brothers had a stake in the status of their mothers and sisters that they could be expected to defend. Ammistamru II triumphed because, by attaining the power to delimit the range of relational and political positions his wife occupied, he circumscribed the authority of her son and brothers. Ammistamru II's investment in what his wife's status meant for his own authority as king was so great that he forbade her restoration even after his death, placed the inheritance of his son in jeopardy, and threatened the kingship and lineage of his brother-in-law, Šaušgamuwa. The relative authority of the men in this case was manifested in their ability to dictate the fate and position of the woman who was simultaneously wife, mother, daughter, and sister.



This chapter will first consider the two Hittite imperial verdicts that introduce the language of the royal patrimonial household into the conflict between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa. The first is RS 1957.1, the key text discussed in the previous chapter which established that the daughter of Bentešina, the daughter of the Great Lady, the wife of Ammistamru II and the sister of Šaušgamuwa were all the same woman. The previous chapter considered this text in light of the intersection of imperial and regional interests manifested in the multiple positions this woman occupied as daughter, wife, and sister. Here we will consider the text in terms of how Ammistamru II asserted himself within this context by manipulating and circumscribing this woman's political position in Amurru. The terms *bītšu mātšu*, "his household, his country," appear in this text to designate Ammistamru II's sphere of authority, while the term *ekallašu ša Amurri*, "his palace in Amurru," identifies the locus of Šaušgamuwa's authority wherein the struggle took place (RS 1957.1: 8, 11). The verdict grants Ammistamru II the power both to drive his wife out of his household and to control the working of another royal household by dictating limits on his wife's position relative to the royal palace of Amurru and on the king Šaušgamuwa's relationship to her.

The second imperial verdict to be considered is RS 18.06-17.365, the Hittite verdict forbidding Šaušgamuwa from resisting or attacking the ships and troops of Ammistamru II that were on their way to Amurru to seize his sister. The surviving portion of this text consists of a long imprecation against Šaušgamuwa that threatens divine retribution should he attempt to do harm to Ammistamru II or his forces. The divine retribution is aimed at Šaušgamuwa's position as king and his position within his

paternal lineage. He is threatened with being ripped out from “from his father’s house, from the country of his father, and from the throne of his fathers, *ištu libbi bīti abīšu u ištu libbi māt abīšu u ištu kussî ša abbēšu*”(RS 18.06-17.365:13’-15’). These verdicts indicate that the stakes of the negotiations were as much the relative power of the two kings as the fate of the woman. The power to dictate her fate was an expression of each king’s hold on his position within his royal patrilineal line.

The second half of this chapter will consider the three accords between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II, which were apparently negotiated and certified purely between the two kings, apart from the official auspices of the Hittite administration (RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360 A, 17.218). In order to recuperate the loss of control over his sister documented in the Hittite verdicts, Šaušgamuwa, in these accords, disassociates himself from his sister and identifies her solely in terms of her relationship to Ammistamru II. The terms of the accords between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II shift from the language of divorce and succession found in the imperial texts to terms commonly found only in royal land grants and property transfers. This aspect of the accords functions on two levels: on one level, the woman is surrendered as property owned by one king and transferred to another, rather than being a political actor sent as a representative of one royal household to another. On a more profound level, however, by transforming the woman into property, the legal syntax of the royal land grant reconfigures the relationship between the two kings into one of grantor and grantee. The considerable compensation in gold that Ammistamru II gives Šaušgamuwa in exchange for the woman’s life indicates the stakes of the agreement. Furthermore, one of the

accords introduces an additional group within the royal household that makes a claim on the gold that Ammistamru II gives Šaušgamuwa. This group is identified as “the sons of the Great Lady,” a group of brothers who share her Hittite affiliation and her status as the offspring of both Bentešina and Gaššuliyawiya, the latter, one will recall, being the daughter of the Hittite Great King Ḫattušili III. The identification of this group of men as claimants on her behalf indicates that the network of relationships in which the daughter of the Great Lady was situated within the royal household of Amurru included her maternal siblings. The royal patrimonial household was constituted not simply by the king’s relationships with the members of his household but by their relationships with each other. Whether or not the Great Lady was still living, her status as a Hittite princess continued to inflect the status of her offspring and differentiate members of the royal household of Amurru.

#### **PATRIMONIAL LANGUAGE IN THE IMPERIAL VERDICTS**

As discussed in the previous chapter, the imperial verdict RS 1957.1 locates the daughter of the Great Lady at the nexus of dynastic connections among the royal households of Ugarit, Amurru, and Hatti. The opening lines identify her in terms of the full range of affiliations within both households. The irony of the text, however, is that while these identifications position her at the fulcrum of multiple alliances, the thrust of the edict is to remove her from her positions.

*Ammistamri šar Ugarit bitta rabīti (ʿbi-it-ta ra-bi-ti)*

*aššassu mārāt Bentešina (DUMU.MUNUS <sup>1</sup>ZAG.ŠEŠ) šar Amurru  
 ištu bītīšu mātīšu itabakši  
 u ina Amurri uttērši u šaušgamuwa  
 šar Amurri bitta rabīti aḫātšu  
 ištu ekallīšu ša Amurri itabakši  
 ina āli šanīm-ma ultēšibši*

Ammistamru, king of Ugarit, drove the daughter of the Great Lady,  
 his wife, daughter of Bentešina king of Amurru,  
 away from his house and his country,  
 and he returned her to Amurru. Šaušgamuwa  
 the king of Amurru, sent the daughter of the Great Lady, his sister  
 away from his palace in Amurru  
 and settled her in another city.  
 (RS 1957.1: 6-12)

She is identified as the wife of Ammistamru II, but she has been driven from his household and country. She is the daughter of Bentešina, the former king of Amurru, the daughter of the Great Lady, and the sister of Šaušgamuwa, the current king of Amurru, but she has also been driven from the palace in Amurru. She is both embedded in a network of relationships yet dislocated from the political loci in which they inhere. She is poised between two centers of power and displaced from both.

The legal language that displaces her from these positions is explicitly patrimonial. The verdict states that Ammistamru II has driven her from *his* house and *his* country, “*ištu bītīšu mātīšu itabakši*”(RS 1957: 8). In this case, as is common usage, the word *bītīšu* (É-*šu*) refers not to a physical location but a social, and this case political, unit.<sup>303</sup> This usage corresponds to Schloen’s concept of “the House of the Father,” but here we see another aspect of the model not considered by Schloen, the political status of

<sup>303</sup> Many examples of this common usage can be found. A relevant one comes from a Hittite treaty: “*nīnu mārū RN šarri rabī gabbīni u É-ni lū ištēn*, we, the sons of RN, the Great King, all of us, and our house, are one” KBo 1 6 r. 9, G. Beckman, HDT<sup>2</sup>, 1999, 93-95 (Nr. 14).

two men constituted not by their relationships to each other as father and son but by their relationships to a woman as wife and sister. Ammistamru II's authority within his household is expressed in his actions as a husband, not as a father. Likewise, the restraints on Šaušgamuwa's actions as a brother, not as a father, are what test the limits of his power as head of his royal household. The respective position of the two kings and their authority within their households are manifested in their ability to act with respect to the woman as a wife or sister. Ammistamru II was not content to remove his wife from her position within the royal household in Ugarit. He also sought to remove her from her position within the royal household in Amurru.

The statement that Ammistamru II has driven his wife out of his household and his country, "*ištu bītīšu mātišu itabakši*," is followed by the complementary statement that Šaušgamuwa has driven her from his *palace*, the royal palace of Amurru, "*ištu ekallīšu ša Amurri itabakši*" (RS 1957.1: 8, 11). The main verb (*itabakši*) and the syntax of these statements are identical; only the political entity from which she is driven differs. In the case of her brother Šaušgamuwa, she is not driven from his, or their, country (*ištu mātišu*), nor is she driven from his household (*ištu bītīšu*). She is driven from the palace, *ištu ekallīšu*. The nuance in this choice of terms suggests that while she has been removed from the center of power embodied in the palace, she has not been effectively cut off from her lineage within the royal family of Amurru. The crucial difference suggested by this shift in terms is amplified by the fact that, as the verdict continues, she is consistently referred to as both the daughter of the Great Lady and Šaušgamuwa's sister, "*bittu rabīti aḫātšu*" (RS 1957.1: 10, 18, 21-22). The language of Hittite imperial descent and

Amurrite royal kinship persists, indicating that her affiliation with the Amurrite royal family continues, even if her political prerogatives are eliminated by removing her from the palace. The persistence of these modes of identification provides the rationale for the prohibitions on Šaušgamuwa that follow, as well as prohibitions in subsequent verdicts that prohibit her other brothers from making claims on her behalf.

The verdict dictates three prohibitions on Šaušgamuwa with regard to his relationship to his sister. She may not go to his palace, *ina ekalli ša šar Amurri appūna lā elli* (RS 1957.1: 13-14). Šaušgamuwa, her brother, may not speak with her, *Šaušgamuwa aḫūši ittiša lā idabbub* (14-15). Finally, he may not return her to Ugarit, *u appūna ina Ugarit lā utārši* (16-17). The assumption in these stipulations is that unless prohibited Ammistamru II's divorced wife would have resumed upon her return from Ugarit a position within the royal household of Amurru involving communication and even political collaboration with her brother the king. Daniel Arnaud and Mirjo Salvini have suggested that the injunctions against Šaušgamuwa conferring or speaking with his sister, "*ittiša lā idabbub*," should not be construed in the mundane sense of conversation, but in a juridical or political sense. They suggest that the intention of the stipulation is to prohibit them from collaborating in a claim for justice, a conspiracy, or a plot.<sup>304</sup> Thus the final stipulation, "*u appūna ina Ugarit lā utārši*," forbids Šaušgamuwa from returning his sister to Ugarit because such a move would constitute a threat to Ammistamru II's

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<sup>304</sup> Daniel Arnaud and Mirjo Salvini, "Le divorce du roi Ammistamru d'Ougarit: un document redécouvert," *Semítica* 41/42 (1991-1992): 12, n. 15: "On remarquera l'emploi du verbe *dabābu*, qui a ici un sens juridique et politique (et non seulement mondain): c'est non pas tant 'bavarder' que 'revendiquer en justice,' 'conspirer,' ou 'comploter.'"

power.<sup>305</sup> Arnaud and Salvini's interpretation of "*ina Ugarit lā utārši*" as a threat to Ammistamru II is strengthened when considered in light of the fact that the verb *târum*, "return," is also used in the injunctions against her son, Ammistamru II's heir, Utrišarruma, stipulated in the initial divorce text discussed in Chapter Two. This verdict dictates that if, after the death of Ammistamru II, Utrišarruma should return his mother to her position as queen of Ugarit, "*ana šarratutti utārši*," he will be removed from his own position as king (RS 17.159: 31-37). Thus the use of "*utārši*" in the prohibition in RS 1957.1, "*ina Ugarit lā utārši*" could express a corresponding concern over Šaušgamuwa restoring her as queen in Ugarit. In both cases, to return her from Amurru to Ugarit would be to reinstate her as queen. The necessity of an imperially endorsed prohibition on her son Utrišarruma and on her brother Šaušgamuwa indicates the level of political investment each man was assumed to hold in their mother and sister's status.

The stipulations limiting the physical movement, communication, and corresponding political position of Šaušgamuwa's sister thus constitute, in effect, a limitation on Šaušgamuwa. While the purpose of the verdict is to displace the woman from any status she might have held in Amurru by virtue of being the sister of the king and the daughter of a Hittite princess, ultimately the king of Amurru is the one whose actions are restricted. Šaušgamuwa shall not speak to his sister, he shall not restore her to Ugarit, nor shall he make any legal claims on her behalf. Šaušgamuwa's actions within his own household in Amurru are regulated to assuage the concerns of Ammistamru II. Ammistamru II intervenes in Šaušgamuwa's sphere of authority in order to prevent

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<sup>305</sup> Arnaud and Salvini, "Le divorce du roi Ammistamru d'Ougarit: un document redécouvert," 20.

Šaušgamuwa from intervening in his own. What Ammistamru II wins in this verdict is the power to delimit relationships within another royal household. Just as Ammistamru II displaced his wife from her position in Ugarit, so must her brother, the king of Amurru, displace his sister from her position in Amurru by severing his relationship to her and withdrawing any future political support. By dictating the configuration of Šaušgamuwa's royal household, Ammistamru II constrains Šaušgamuwa's authority as king.

The competition between the spheres of authority of the two kings that underlies this conflict emerges dramatically to the fore in a subsequent text. The Hittite verdict RS 18.06-17.365 reveals that the stakes for both kings in the fate of the woman are in fact their own positions within their kingdoms and within their royal lineage. The tablet is broken such that the standard prologue and the concluding formulas of the legal verdict have been lost.<sup>306</sup> The text that remains is an elaborate imprecation against Šaušgamuwa. He may not attack or prevent Ammistamru II's troops and ships from taking his sister back to Ugarit from Amurru. The terms of the divine punishment for this action that Ammistamru II invokes are dramatic. Rather than simply a matter of the life and death of an Amurrite princess and former queen of Ugarit, the conflict becomes a potential contest of life and death between two kings.

The imprecation that forms the heart of the surviving text anticipates the pivotal moment at which Ammistamru II's troops will seize Šaušgamuwa's sister and take her to

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<sup>306</sup> While the introductory formulas have been lost, Nougayrol observed that the color of the clay, the shape of the tablet, and the form of the signs indicate without a doubt that the tablet is Hittite (PRU IV: 137).



her death. The tense of the verbs in the opening conditional statements indicates that the Ugaritic ships are on their way but have not yet arrived. The intention of the verdict appears to be to intervene in anticipated direct military conflict between the two kings.

[u šumma] šaušgamuw[a mār Bentešina šar amurri]  
 nērtu eppaš ana Ammistamri mār Niqmepa  
 šar Ugarit ū eppaš nērtu  
 ana eleppēti u ana šābī ša illakūni  
 ana ḥulluqi mārat rabīti

[If] Saušgamuw[a, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru]  
 should do violence to Ammistamru son of Niqmepa  
 king of Ugarit or do violence  
 to the ships and to the troops who are coming  
 to make the daughter of the Great Lady disappear, . .  
 (RS 18.06-17.365:1'-5')

The expression “*nērtu eppaš*” is striking, especially as it is applied not simply to the king of Ugarit and his troops, but even to the ships. While in this context the phrase is conventionally translated, “do violence,” it is more commonly used to mean, “commit murder,” as *nērtu* derives from the verb *nēru*, to kill.<sup>307</sup> Although the purpose of the Ugaritic troops and ships coming to Amurru is expressed somewhat obliquely as “to make the daughter of the Great Lady disappear, *ana ḥulluqi mārat rabīti*,” the level of anticipated violence by Šaušgamuwa makes it clear that life and death are at stake, for the princess as well as for the two kings.

The stakes of the conflict between the kings are revealed in the language of the imprecation that follows. The oath goes further than threatening Šaušgamuwa’s life and physical safety. His right to rule as a king of Amurru and his place in his paternal lineage

<sup>307</sup> *nērtu* is a rare word, appearing in specialized, formal contexts, i.e. CH 1:28. See CAD N2: 177.

are threatened. Ammistamru II calls heaven and earth and a host of deities to punish Šaušgamuwa in kind, both for violence he might do to Ammistamru II and for the violence he might prevent Ammistamru II from doing to his sister.<sup>308</sup> The imprecation repeats the key words *nêrtu* and *ḫulluqu*.

*u ilānū annûtu  
nêrta lîpušûniššu  
u liḫalliḳûšu ištu libbi bîti abîšu  
u ištu libbi mât abîšu u ištu kussî  
ša abbêšu*

. . . may these gods  
do violence to him  
and may they cause him to disappear from his father's house,  
from the country of his father, and from the throne  
of his fathers.  
(RS 18.06-17.365: 11'-15')

The injunctions *nêrta lîpušûniššu* and *liḫalliḳûšu* here in the apodosis echo both forms of violence expressed in the protasis, *nêrta eppaš* and *ana ḫulluqi*. The first injunction, *nêrta lîpušûniššu*, is a straight-forward parallel to the protasis: if Šaušgamuwa attempts to kill Ammistamru II, his troops or even his ships, then let Šaušgamuwa be killed. The second injunction, *liḫalliḳûšu*, is more complex. If Šaušgamuwa attempts to protect his sister by doing violence to the ships and troops which “are coming to make the daughter of the Great Lady disappear, *ša illakû-ni ana ḫulluqi mârât rabîti*,” Šaušgamuwa will be made to “disappear” from every aspect of his political and patrimonial lineage: “from his father's house, from the country of his father, and from the throne of his fathers, *ishtu libbi*

<sup>308</sup> Many of the gods called upon in the imprecation are, as is common, local manifestations of the major deities: <sup>d</sup>IŠ<sub>8</sub>TÂR <sup>ur</sup>tû-ni-ip, <sup>d</sup>IŠKUR ḪUR.SAG ḫa-zi, <sup>d</sup>ḫé-bat <sup>ur</sup>a-ri. Notably, in the case of Ishtar of Tunip, the locality is at the frontier between Amurru and Ugarit.

*bīti abīšu u ištu libbi māt abīšu u ištu kussê ša abbēšu*”( RS 18.06-17.365: 13'-15'). The counterpoint established by the pairing of *ana hulluqi* in the protasis and *lihalliqūšu* in the apodosis reveals the full import of what Ammistamru II intends to do to his wife. The “disappearance” Ammistamru II intends for the daughter of the Great Lady is not simply death, but a radical erasure from her political position and royal lineage, such as the one with which Ammistamru II threatens her brother.

This punishment-in-kind formula, which links the status of the brother to the status of his sister, evokes the tie between the status of mother and son in the initial divorce verdict discussed in Chapter Two. As stated above, this verdict stipulated that if Utrišarruma, Ammistamru II's heir and son of the daughter of the Great Lady, should return his mother to her position as queen of Ugarit, he would be removed from his own position as successor to his father and king in Ugarit (RS 17.159: 31-37). In both cases, if Utrišarruma or Šaušgamuwa attempts to reverse Ammistamru II's actions against their mother or sister, they will receive the same punishment she is given: loss of political position within a patrimonial royal household and lineage. Utrišarruma stands to lose his inheritance from his father and his future position as king of Ugarit. Šaušgamuwa stands to lose his kingship and his place in his patrimonial line.

The equation of the status of royal women and men--sisters and brothers, mothers and sons--that emerges in this context of retribution sheds light on how relationships within royal households were conceptualized. The most telling aspect of this case as a whole is that even after divorcing her, in order to delegitimize his wife's claim on political status in Ugarit or Amurru, Ammistamru II had to sever her relationships first to

her son and then to her brother. Ammistamru II stripped his wife of her position in Ugarit and prevented her from reclaiming it after his death by breaking the tie between her and Utrišarruma and forbidding any future political collaboration between mother and son. Ammistamru II then stripped his wife of her position in Amurru by breaking the tie between her and Šaušgamuwa and forbidding any future political collaboration between sister and brother. In both cases, a man's kingship and position in the patrilineal line was threatened on the basis of his protecting the position of a royal woman. These threats indicate that, beyond her relationship with her husband and father, a royal woman could be expected to rely on her son and brothers to maintain her political position. Furthermore, the threats indicate that royal men would be invested enough in the status of their mothers and sisters that they would be expected to offer such support. Kingship and queenship could be sustained or threatened on the basis of a wide network of relationships within a royal household.

Ammistamru II asserted his authority as king and his primacy over his son Utrišarruma and over his brother-in-law Šaušgamuwa by circumscribing the range of their political action within their royal households. As noted at the outset of this chapter, the relative authority of the men in this case was expressed in their ability to dictate the fate and position of the woman who was at one and the same time a wife, a mother, a daughter, and a sister. Because royal households were constituted by a network of relationships between women and men across and within generations, the ability to regulate or restructure these relationships was crucial to establishing the authority of a ruler. The problem facing Šaušgamuwa was how to reestablish his authority on par with

Ammistamru II in the midst of imperial authorization of Ammistamru II's incursions into the sphere of his household.

## THE ACCORDS BETWEEN THE KINGS

The recourse that Šaušgamuwa drew on to deal with this crisis further illuminates the integral connection between the relative status of royal women and men.

Ammistamru II's efforts to strip his repudiated wife of her status in Ugarit and Amurru were successful, as were the concomitant restrictions he placed on her brother

Šaušgamuwa. The only way for Šaušgamuwa to save face in this situation and to regain equal footing with Ammistamru II was to disavow his relationship to his sister and his investment in her status. He does this in a series of three surviving accords with

Ammistamru II (RS 17.228, RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360 A, and RS 17.318-RS 17.349). All of them include the convention of representing Šaušgamuwa's direct speech.

Šaušgamuwa's stance toward his sister and Ammistamru II in these speeches differs radically from the incipient life and death conflict anticipated in the previous verdict, RS 18.06-17.365. In these speeches, Šaušgamuwa no longer identifies Ammistamru II's wife as his sister. In direct opposition to the first verdict discussed in this chapter, RS 1957.1, in which the title "the daughter of the Great Lady" is always paired with the phrase "his sister," "*bittu rabīti aḥātšu*" (RS 1957.1: 10, 18, 21-22), in these accords her title is paired with identifications that place her purely in relationship to Ammistamru II and disassociate her from Šaušgamuwa. Šaušgamuwa refers to the daughter of the Great Lady

not as sister, but as Ammistamru II's wife, as Ammistamru II's malefactor, and even as "that woman."

The most remarkable feature of accords, however, is that Šaušgamuwa's direct discourse is set within the legal format of property transfer used in the royal land grants found in the palace at Ugarit. The legal syntax of these accords and their use of the specialized terminology of land grants transform what had been an inter-regional conflict requiring complex maneuvering between competing political interests into a straightforward exchange of property between two parties, Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II. In what follows, we will examine the accords in terms of their use of the major features of royal land grants in order to demonstrate the dramatic ramifications of Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II using such language with regard to a royal woman. We will then show how the legal format of a royal grant and the rhetorical strategies of Šaušgamuwa's direct speech work together to reconfigure the status of the woman, Šaušgamuwa's relationship to her, and thus his status relative to Ammistamru II.

The organizing legal syntax of the accords between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa is undeniably patterned on texts certifying property transfers and the royal grants that were uncovered in the palace at Ugarit.<sup>309</sup> A brief comparison of the major

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<sup>309</sup> The most recent treatment of this genre of texts from Ugarit and their characteristic legal formula "*našû-nadānu*" is Ignacio Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit: a Study of Ancient Near Eastern Diplomats*, *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* Bd. 335 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2006). Earlier discussions include: Ephraim A. Speiser, "Akkadian Documents from Ras Shamra," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 75, no. 3 (1955): 154-165; Casper J. Labuschagne, "The *našû-nadānu* Formula and its Biblical Equivalent," *Travels in the World of the Old Testament: Studies Presented to Professor M. A. Beek on the Occasion of His 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, edited by M.S.H.G. Heerma van Voss, Ph.H.J. Houwink ten Cate, and N.A. van Uchlen, *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 16 (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1974) 176-180; Jonas Greenfield, "*našû-nadānu* and its Congeners," in *Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Memory of Jacob Joel Finkelstein*, edited by M. de Jong Ellis (Hamden, CT: 1977) 87-91; Gerald Irving Miller, *Studies in the*

diagnostic features of royal land grants and the framework of the accords between the kings will demonstrate their similarity in structure. The standard prologue of the royal grants, *ištu ūmi annîm*, “from this day,” locates the property transfer in time and puts it into effect for all days to come.<sup>310</sup> The bequest is then expressed by the combined verbs, *našû-nadānu*, literally to “lift up and give,” in the perfect tense, “*ittaši . . . u ittadin*.” The property given is always immovable property: land, vineyards, and houses. The *našû-nadānu* clause is frequently followed by the repetition of the verb *ittadin* in a clause that states an amount of gold or silver that the one receiving the property offers to the one granting the property. With a few notable exceptions, this amount is typically between 100 and 500 shekels of silver.<sup>311</sup> Nougayrol characterized this type of grant as “a gift with a counter gift.” Other transactions involve no such payment and simply certify the king’s bequest of property or the transfer of property between two parties. In all of these exchanges, the standard terminology for the transfer of land, houses, and other immovable property is *našû-nadānu*. The transaction is then verified with a royal seal,

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*Juridical Texts from Ugarit*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1980; and Clayton T. Libolt, *Royal Land Grants from Ugarit*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1985.

<sup>310</sup> Guy Kestemont, *Diplomatique et Droit International en Asie Occidentale (1600-1200 av. J.C.)*, Louvain-la-neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, Institut Orientaliste, 1974) 172 and n. 76, cited in Márquez Rowe, *Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 180-181.

<sup>311</sup> RS 16.353 and RS 16.282 involve 1,000 shekels of silver. RS 16.135 involves 2,000 shekels of silver. RS 16.189, RS 16.260, RS 16.252, RS 16.205-RS 16.192 are transactions that involve gold. Only RS 16.189 comes near to the amount Ammistamru II gives to Šaušgamuwa for his sister; however, this amount is not what is given in exchange for the property but only the penalty that must be paid by anyone attempting the challenge the ownership of the property in court (PRU III: 91).

usually the dynastic seal, but also occasionally with the personal seal of the reigning king.<sup>312</sup>

The grant RS 16.260 lays out this structure in its most elementary form.<sup>313</sup> It is an act of the king, which Nougayrol would characterize as a “gift with a counter gift.” The brief text, cited in full, is as follows:

From this day (*ištu ūmi annîm*), Niqmepa son of Niqmadu, king of Ugarit, has taken up (*ittāši*) the house and field and given them (*u ittadin*) to Amaniḫu, his servant, and Amaniḫu has given (*ittadin*) one hundred fifty shekels of gold as a payment to honor the king his lord. No one may take it from Amaniḫu. Seal of Niqmepa, son of Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit.  
(RS 16.260: 1-8)

The framework of the accords between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II follows this pattern exactly with the additional inclusion of Šaušgamuwa’s direct speech. The exemplary schema of the accord RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A, in outline form, is as follows:

From this day (*ištu ūmi annîm*), Šaušgamuwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru, has taken (*ittāši*) the daughter of the Great Lady and given her (*u ittadinši*) to Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit.

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<sup>312</sup> The features laid out here have been noticed by all commentators on these texts, although debate exists over how to categorize these features as a whole and understand the ramifications of the use of particular terms in individual texts. Márquez-Rowe’s formulation is most helpful here as he characterizes the scheme of the deeds in terms of three broad components: the impression of the royal or dynastic seal of the king, the operative part of the document, and the statement specifying the owner of the seal. Within the category of the “operative part of the document” Márquez-Rowe includes as primary diagnostic features the introductory formula (*ištu ūmi annîm*), the *našû-nadānu* formula, and the *nadānu* formula. See Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 175-221.

<sup>313</sup> The basic structure of this brief text is typically expanded in other cases by identifying the property granted by the name of its prior owners or tenants. Márquez Rowe considers these identifications as part of the “historical background of the ownership of the property to be transferred” (63, see also 224-225). Speiser, on the other hand, considered the person with whom the property was associated in the first instance to be a party in the exchange, who has “no say in the matter” (Speiser, “Akkadian Documents from Ras Shamra,” 158). Speiser understood the terms *našû-nadānu* as signaling a three-way exchange in which the king takes property from one person and gives it to another (160). Labuschagne disagreed with Speiser’s interpretation and pointed out that *našû-nadānu* formula appears in 14 texts in which king and another person are the only parties to the exchange and in nine of the sixteen cases where there were three parties to the exchange only *nadānu* is used (178).



[Direct discourse of Šaušgamuwa.]

On the day that Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit, heard that the daughter of the Great Lady had died, he gave (*ittadin*) a thousand shekels of good refined gold to Šaušgamuwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru. Seal of Aziru, king of Amurru, seal of Šaušgamuwa, king of Amurru.  
(RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A: 1-7)

In this accord, Šaušgamuwa is positioned as the royal figure who grants the property, analogous to Niqmepa, the Ugaritic sovereign in RS 16.260 who was the father of Ammistamru II. By the same token, in a reversal of the Ugaritic royal grants in which he always represented as the grantor, Ammistamru II is positioned as the grantee in the accords with Šaušgamuwa, analogous to Amaniḫu's position in RS 16.260. As Amaniḫu does, Ammistamru II gives a counter gift to his grantor Šaušgamuwa; however, in his case his counter gift is an amount of gold unparalleled in magnitude by any other royal grant from Ugarit. Šaušgamuwa's royal and dynastic seals, not Ammistamru II's, certify the transfer, further accentuating Šaušgamuwa's position as the royal grantor and his control over their transaction. Šaušgamuwa's seals, not Ammistamru II's certify the document. The seals include both the dynastic and the personal seals. The dynastic seal is the anepigraphic seal of Aziru, the progenitor of the royal line, a seal that was used throughout the reigns of the preceding kings of Amurru. As noted in the previous chapter, the personal seal of Šaušgamuwa is impressed with Hittite hieroglyphs and identifies the king as a prince of the Hittite imperial family.

In order to draw out the implications of this patterning of the accords between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II, a brief discussion of the nature of royal grants is necessary. The corpus of royal grants at Ugarit is considerable and the *našû-nadānu*

formula has been found to date only in these texts.<sup>314</sup> The accords between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II are the sole example of this type of document from Amurru, yet the lack of excavation or even the identification of the royal palace of Amurru makes it impossible to know if the practice of royal grants was as widespread in Amurru as in Ugarit. Certainly the commonality in form, evident above, between the Amurrite accords and the Ugaritic royal grants strongly suggests that the formulas were known in both contexts. The regularity of format, vocabulary, and purpose of the texts found at Ugarit makes them a recognizable genre and indicates that the practice of royal grants that the texts encode was a standard one in the kingdom. When Nougayrol published these texts, he divided them into three types: exchanges between persons certified by witnesses, exchanges between persons certified by the king, and property grants made by the king.

<sup>315</sup> The last two types make up the majority of the corpus. The purpose of this genre of texts is to certify the transfer of property and put the new ownership into effect by the inscribing of the tablet itself. Yet a royal grant is not simply a bequest of property but also an act that reinforces the relationship of sovereign to the grantee. The grant records the sovereign's control of both the property and the transfer process. Furthermore, unlike exchanges between non-royal persons in which witnesses are a standard part of the document, in royal grants the king is his own guarantor. The use of the royal land grant formula enables Šaušgamuwa to reestablish or even elevate his status in relationship to

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<sup>314</sup> According to his criteria, Márquez Rowe counts 176 of these texts as being royal deeds (Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 25-48). As to the origin of the *našû-nadānu* formula, Speiser speculates based on comparative Hebrew evidence that the idiom may be indigenous to West Semitic. See Speiser, "Akkadian Documents from Ras Shamra," 160, n.45.

<sup>315</sup> Nougayrol, PRU III: 23-28.

Ammistamru II by reframing the transfer of his sister not as an act of surrender but as a royal grant that he alone has the power to make.

While we have no other exemplars of a document certifying an exchange between kings other than these texts, this use of the royal grant framework and the relative positioning of Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa is telling. Whereas the imperial texts discussed above depict the transfer of the daughter of the Great Lady from Šaušgamuwa to Ammistamru II as an act of capitulation on the part of Šaušgamuwa, the framework of these accords makes her transfer back to Ammistamru II appear to be a grant bequeathed by Šaušgamuwa based on his own initiation and his ultimate control over the woman. This shift in the relative positions of the two kings is made even more explicit by the fact that the grant is not authorized by an imperial authority nor is it jointly authorized by Ammistamru II. Šaušgamuwa's seals alone authorize the transfer. The most profound feature of the accords' use of royal grant formulas, however, is the radical shift in the status of the woman upon which the shift in the relative status of the two men is based.

The "property" granted by Šaušgamuwa to Ammistamru II is the daughter of the Great Lady herself. Although unlike a vineyard or a field a woman can be moved, just as in this case the woman is brought back to Ugarit from Amurru, the text does not certify the woman's transfer in space. It certifies a transfer in ownership. The exchange of a royal person for a price is unprecedented in surviving texts from Ugarit. Certainly, as discussed below, exchanges of staff or servants between two high-status individuals were not uncommon, but an exchange of a person of royal status on these terms exists nowhere else. Marriage arrangements and the giving of dowries do not make use of such language.

The term in the divorce texts between Ammistamru II and the daughter of the Great Lady that describes their relationship is the standard expression for marriage “*ana aššuttīšu ilteqe*,” literally, “he took her in wifehood”(RS 17.159: 5-6). A single text from the Ugaritic royal palace, RS 16.141, combines the transfer of a woman in marriage alongside the transfer of property, yet this grant makes the difference between these two acts explicit. The giving of the woman is certified in a clause distinct from the giving of land and immovable property. The transfer of the house and property between the two men is expressed with the standard *našû-nadānu* formula, whereas the transfer of the woman is expressed in a clause comparable to “*ana aššuttīšu ilteqe*,” namely, she is said to be given as a bride, “*ana kallūtīšu ša PN*”(RS 16.141: 9). The bride herself is not property; rather, the property is part of the collateral, the value of which must be returned if the marriage is dissolved.

To put in perspective the use of the technical language and legal syntax of property conveyance in regard to the transfer of a royal woman, a review of the typical relationship of royal women to land and property grants is useful. From the earliest to the latest surviving records of Ugaritic royal women, property exchanges commonly appear. Such records survive for the first recorded queen, Pišidqi, for Ammistamru II’s mother Aḥatumilki, and as discussed in the first chapter, for the final recorded queen of Ugarit, Šarelli. In all these transactions, the queen is never the property; she is typically the one acquiring property.<sup>316</sup> One broken and difficult text associated with Ammistamaru II’s

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<sup>316</sup> Exchanges by Pišidqi include RS 15.086, RS 16.277, and RS 16.263. For Aḥatumilki, see RS 16.197 (her seal documents an exchange in the name of Ammistamru II). In the case of Šarelli, several legal

Aḥatumilki, in fact, attests to her acquiring a person. While the nature of the position of the man she acquires might be debated, in this text Ammistamru II clearly transfers a man from a previous position into the service of the queen (RS 16.348).<sup>317</sup> While no such property transfer documents survive for the daughter of the Great Lady, the division of property stipulated in the verdict of the king of Karkamiš discussed in Chapter Two, RS 17.396, indicates that during her tenure in Ugarit she acquired moveable goods and persons as servants. How could a royal woman, who would be expected to be an agent in a property transfer, be rendered the object of such a transfer?

A closer examination of the exchange between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa framed in RS 17.228 and RS 17.372 A -RS 17.360A will show how the rhetorical strategies of Šaušgamuwa's direct speech work together with the convention of property transfer to reconfigure the status of his sister, his relationship to her, and thus his position relative to Ammistamru II. Both texts open with the standard legal formula, "*ištu ūmi annîm*, from this day" and then introduce Šaušgamuwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru, as the initiator of the grant (RS 17.228:1-2; RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360:1-2). At this point the two texts diverge slightly. RS 17.228 continues immediately with Šaušgamuwa's direct speech, while RS 17.372A-RS 17.360A prefaces this speech with a

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documents dealing with land transactions were found together in room 66 of the palace central archive that are clearly attributed to her.

<sup>317</sup> The use of specialized terms for types of service makes the precise interpretation of this text elusive. The transfer is initiated by Ammistamru II and records that he "has removed (changed/transferred) Yanḥamma son of Napakki and his sons/ from the *mur'u* service of Ibiranu/ and installed him as a *mūdû* of the queen; *unakkir Yanḥamma mār Napakki u mārīšu/ ištu pil(ki) mur'i Ibirana/ u iškuššu mūde šarrati*" (RS 16.348: 4-6).

summary statement of Šaušgamuwa's portion of the exchange that makes use of the technical terms: "ittāši . . . u ittadin."

*ištu ūmi annîm  
šaušgamuwa mār Bentešina šar Amurri  
akanna iqtebi ana Ammistamri  
mār Niqmepa šar Ugarit  
mā anummê mārāt rabīti aššatka  
ša hīta rabâ tētapaš ana kâša*

From this day  
Šaušgamuwa son of Bentešina king of Amurru  
Has spoken thus to Ammistamru,  
son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit,  
"Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, your wife  
who has committed a great crime against you . . .  
(RS 17.228: 1-6)

*ištu ūmi annîm  
šaušgamuwa mār Bentešina šar Amurri  
ittāši mārāt rabīti u ittadinši  
ana qāti Ammistamri mār Niqmepa  
šar Ugarit  
u akanna iqtabi umma šinništum šīt  
ana kâša hīta rabâ tihteṭi*

From this day  
Šaušgamuwa son of Bentešina king of Amurru  
has offered up the daughter of the Great Lady and given her  
to Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,  
king of Ugarit  
and spoke thus, "that woman  
has committed a great offense against you . . .  
(RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A: 1-7)

Šaušgamuwa's direct discourse in each text identifies the woman as the daughter of the Great Lady but in a manner that disassociates her from Šaušgamuwa or any vestige of her connection to Amurru. She is no longer identified as his sister but as Ammistamaru II's

wife, “that woman,” someone guilty of a great crime. Moreover, the fact that the discourse is framed as the words of Šaušgamuwa to Ammistamru II allows for the use of second person singular forms that definitively place her in the sphere of Ammistamru II’s authority. Šaušgamuwa identifies her to Ammistamru II as “*your* wife,” one who has committed a great crime “against *you*.” While this speech orientation could of course have allowed for Šaušgamuwa’s use of first person forms, such as “my sister,” these forms never appear in his speech. The transfer of the woman is anticipated and even enacted in the way she is rhetorically positioned with respect to Ammistamru II in Šaušgamuwa’s direct discourse.

The speech of Šaušgamuwa that follows is nearly identical in the two texts. His declarations constitute a complete disassociation of himself from his sister and represent any continued interaction with her as a service he has done for Ammistamru II.

*u anāku adi immati ašbāku*  
*u anašsar bēlet ḫīṭika*

Now, as for me, how long should I sit  
and guard your malefactress?  
(RS 17.228: 7-8)

*u anāku adi mati ašbāku*  
*ana našāri aššatika anāku*  
*nāšir bēl ḫīṭika*

Now, as for me, how long shall I sit by  
and guard your wife? Am I  
the guardian of your malefactress?  
(RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A: 8-9)

Contrary to Šaušgamuwa’s violent resistance to Ammistamru II’s seizure of his sister that was anticipated in the Hittite verdict RS 18.06-17.365, his speech here asserts that

Ammistamru II and not himself was responsible for the woman's continued presence in Amurru. Indeed, the rhetorical questions convey indignation that this woman has been so long under Šaušgamuwa's care. The juxtaposition of the first and second person forms, "Am *I* the guardian of *your* malefactor," suggests that since Ammistamru II is the injured party, he is the one who should be responsible for her. Šaušgamuwa presents himself not as a brother surrendering a sister but as a king who demands that a husband take back his wife.

Šaušgamuwa's disassociation of himself from the fate of his sister reaches dramatic proportions in the final segment of his speech. A sequence of imperatives gives full license to Ammistamru II to punish her as he wishes.

*annumamê mārāt rabīti bēlet hītīka*  
*leqēša u atta*  
*kī libbīka epušša*  
*šumma libbīka u dēkša*  
*u šumma libbūka*<sup>318</sup>  
*ina libbi tāmti kururša*  
*u šumma kī libbīka epuš mārāt rabīti*

Here is the daughter of the Great Lady, your malefactor,  
 take her and you,  
 do with her as you will.  
 If you wish, kill her.  
 or if you wish,  
 throw her into the middle of the sea.  
 Whatever you wish, do it to the daughter of the Great Lady.  
 (RS 17.228: 9-15.)<sup>319</sup>

<sup>318</sup> The text includes a conflict in case ending, likely a scribal error, in this parallel construction: *šum-ma lib-bi-ka* in line 12 but *šum-ma lib-bu-ka* in line 13.

<sup>319</sup> The parallel passage in RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A breaks off halfway through this sequence of imperatives, at the injunction to throw her into the sea. The text resumes on the joined tablet RS 17.360A with stipulations on Ammistamru II regarding her transfer.



As in the previous segments of the speech, the title “daughter of the Great Lady” is paired with a title that incriminates her, positions her as belonging to Ammistamru II, and distances her from Šaušgamuwa. In the previous segment he identifies her as “the daughter of the Great Lady, your wife, who has committed a great crime against you, *mārat rabīti aššatuka ša hīṭa rabâ tētapas ana kâša*”(RS 17.228: 5-6; c.f. RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A: 11-12). Here again she is “the daughter of the Great Lady, your malefactress, *mārat rabīti bēlet hīṭika*”(RS 17.228: 9). The daughter of the Great Lady is no longer the sister of Šaušgamuwa, the daughter of Bentešina, or the mother of Utrišarruma. She is simply Ammistamru II’s wife and malefactress. In their repetition, the incriminating appositives begin to work on the significance of her remaining title. By the time the title “daughter of the Great Lady” occurs on its own in the final injunction in line 15, “thus, do whatever you wish to the daughter of the Great Lady; *u šumma kī libbīka epuš mārat rabīti*,” her title has become more associated with wrongdoing than with prestige. The rhetorical distancing of himself from his sister that Šaušgamuwa accomplishes by identifying her as “your wife, your malefactress, that woman” dissociates him from her loss of position and loss of life. Indeed, the speech suggests that her violent end was as much the product of his suggestion as Ammistamru II’s volition.

The alienation of the daughter of the Great Lady from her brother, the king, which this discourse puts into effect provides the basis upon which the principle of the land grant rests. In all previous texts, the woman has been distinguished by a range of identifying terms that indicate the multiple network of imperial and royal relationships in which she is enmeshed. Furthermore, the fact that the majority of the verdicts that deal

with the case are imperial degrees further indicates that neither Ammistamru II nor Šaušgamuwa had exclusive rights over her fate. The distance between the woman as the subject of an imperial legal verdict and the woman as the object of a royal grant is great. The simple existence of the imperial verdicts indicate that as the daughter of a Hittite princess her fate could not be decided independent of Hittite authority. Ammistamru II was required to plead his case in a court higher than his own kingdom. By the same token, Šaušgamuwa could not act unilaterally in regard to his sister without imperial oversight, whether to expel her from his palace or protect her within it. In these accords however, imperial oversight is replaced by royal regional authority by virtue of the use of royal land grant formulas. Šaušgamuwa alone grants his sister to Ammistamru II. The grant is authorized by no other authority than his own seal and no mediation exists between his ownership of her and his granting of ownership to Ammistamru II. Although she continues to be identified as the daughter of the Great Lady, the imperial significance of this title is undermined by the framework of the land grant and by a discourse in which she is positioned purely in relationship to Ammistamru II.

At the midpoint of the accord RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A, a telling declaration is made. As discussed above, the tablet opens with the legal statement that Šaušgamuwa has “offered up and given” his sister and then follows with Šaušgamuwa’s direct speech renouncing his sister. The tablet concludes by certifying that Ammistamru II paid a thousand shekels of gold to Šaušgamuwa in the wake of the death of the daughter of the

Great Lady.<sup>320</sup> At the center, between these two acts, is the declaration that the two kings and their future male offspring have established brotherhood between them for ever, “*aḥḥutta ina bērišunu adi darīti iltaknū*”(RS 17.372 A-RS 17.360A: 6’-7’). In light of the relationship between the two kings prior to the divorce, this statement is extraordinary. The marriage between Šaušgamuwa’s sister and Ammistamru II had already made the two kings “brothers,” as was the political convention for interdynastic marriages at the time.<sup>321</sup> However, here, the mutual renunciation of the woman is what has re-established their brotherhood. The relationship between the two men continues to be mediated by the woman but by her death, not her life.

The rhetoric of Šaušgamuwa’s speeches in these accords and the legal vehicle of property exchange thus reverse the standard method of forming interdynastic alliances. Rather than their alliance being brokered by a woman whose identity as wife, daughter, and sister and whose generative role as a royal mother unites lineages, Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa forge an alliance by sending a woman to her death. The daughter of the Great Lady’s Hittite lineage and the political alliances she embodied meant that her case had to be arbitrated on both an imperial and an interdynastic level. The prolonged negotiations reveal the complex network of relationships in which royal women operated, within and between royal households. Ammistamru II asserted his sphere of authority over Šaušgamuwa by severing fundamental relationships within Šaušgamuwa’s royal

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<sup>320</sup> While one could take this transaction as the payment of “blood money” by Ammistamru II to Šaušgamuwa, the framework and use of the idiom *našû-nadānu* suggests that the transaction is also to be understood in terms of a land transaction in which Ammistamru II’s ownership is asserted ultimately by her death.

<sup>321</sup> This trope is widespread in the Amarna letters, the major source for documenting Late Bronze Age diplomatics.

household. Šaušgamuwa regained his standing in relation to Ammistamru II by disavowing his relationship to his sister. The royal woman who had been enmeshed in a network of alliances became simply property that could be acquired and disposed of by a single man.

### **THE SONS OF THE GREAT LADY**

The third accord in this group, RS 17.318-17.349 A, however, introduces a destabilizing element to the exchange between the two kings and evokes the persistent obstacle against which Ammistamru II contends: the fact that woman's status is after all not purely a function of her position as wife in Ugarit and sister in Amurru. She remains the "daughter of the Great Lady," affiliated both to the Hittite line and to those in the royal household of Amurru who share her imperial lineage. The emergence of her maternal brothers, the "sons of the Great Lady," in this third surviving accord between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II reminds us that royal households were not constituted simply by kings, nor were interdynastic politics driven solely by negotiations between them. Along with the synchronic dimension of interdynastic politics, characterized by the exchange of women as wives between kings, royal households were also constituted by diachronic, intergenerational relationships, which in turn shaped relationships among peers and siblings. Royal women were crucial in the reproduction of political relationships across generations. By definition, royal paternity was shared among members of a royal household, thus distinctions among siblings were made by their maternal affiliations. This accord is not an example of the identification of a set of

members of the royal household by virtue of shared maternal descent. Furthermore, it communicates what this shared maternal affiliation meant: a stake in the political and the material status and fate of their maternal siblings.

RS 17.318-17.349A brings back the contingent of the “sons of the Great Lady” who appeared in the Hittite verdict RS 17.082, discussed in the previous chapter. In both cases these men are represented as potential parties to a lawsuit, alongside Šaušgamuwa, on behalf of the daughter of the Great Lady. Because both passages follow the standard format of legal non-contest clauses, they are remarkably similar. The Hittite verdict RS 17.082 is the most conventional in format.

*urram šēram*  
*Šaušgamuwa mār Bentešina*  
*šar Amurri*  
*u mārū rabīti*  
*dīna mimma*  
*lā inammuš*  
*itti Ammistamri mār Niqmepa*  
*šar Ugarit*  
*u itti mārīšu adi [dārīt]i*  
*šumma dīna mimma*  
*iraggumū u tupp[u annū*  
*ila”ēšunu]*

In the future  
Šaušgamuwa son of Bentešina  
king of Amurru  
and the sons of the Great Lady  
may not bring  
any kind of lawsuit  
against Ammistamru son of Niqmepa,  
king of Ugarit,  
or his sons forever.  
If they pursue any kind of lawsuit,  
[this] tabl[et

will overcome them.]  
(RS 17.082: 13-24)

The format of the familiar non-contest formula, “*šumma dīna mīmma iraggumū u tupp[u annû ila]’ēšunu*],” is suggestive. The fact that the sons of the Great Lady are included alongside Šaušgamuwa with no further elaboration conveys the sense that their stake in the suit is to be expected. What sets this verdict apart from the imperial verdicts in which the sons of the Great Lady do not appear is that the verdict is positioned as being issued after their sister’s death. The basis on which their potential suit is posited is expressed in the circumlocution, *kī ḫalqat*, meaning, “because she has disappeared (or perished)” (RS 17.082: 12). The presence of this expression could indicate that when the negotiations concerned her position within the royal household as arbitrated by forces outside of Amurru, their brother the king was the appropriate representative, but when it came to the value of her life, her other brothers were equally invested and would have been expected to make a claim.

The royal accord RS 17.318-17.349A indicates that this may very well have been the case: that the daughter of the Great Lady’s maternal brothers would be expected to join in the suit once their sister’s loss of life was at stake. The format of the standard legal non-contest clause is nearly identical to the Hittite text RS 17.082, yet this accord adds a crucial element of direct speech on the part of the sons of the Great Lady.

*urram šēra[m lā] itūr  
šaušgamuwa mār Bentešina šar Amurru  
u mārū rabīti ina dīnāti  
itti Ammistamru mār Niqmepa  
šar Ugarit*

*šumma dīnāti mimma inammuš<sup>322</sup>*  
*u iqabbû mā mullâ ša damī<sup>323</sup>*  
*ša aḥāti naši idnam-mi*  
*u ṭuppu annû ila<sup>323</sup>ēšu*

In the future,  
 Saušgamuwa, son of Bentešina, king of Amurru,  
 and the sons of the Great Lady shall not sue  
 Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa,  
 king of Ugarit.  
 If they do initiate any suit  
 and say: “Give (us) compensation for the blood  
 of (our) sister!” -  
 then this tablet shall overcome them.  
 (RS 17.318-17.349: 17'-25')

This insertion makes it clear that the basis of an anticipated suit by the sons of the Great Lady is the fact that, as their sister, the daughter of the Great Lady's life is intrinsically related enough to their own that they must be compensated for the loss of it. The speech of the sons of the Great Lady is directly opposed to that of Šaušgamuwa with which the surviving portion of this tablet begins. As the other two accords do, RS 17.318-17.349 represents Šaušgamuwa as disowning his sister and granting Ammistamru II the right to kill her or treat her as he chooses. This cry of the sons of the Great Lady for compensation for the blood of their sister erupts against the veneer of disassociation

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<sup>322</sup> While the verb *inammuš* here is in the singular and the verb *ila<sup>323</sup>ēšu* in the concluding formula carries a singular object marker, the subject and object should be considered plural. Márquez Rowe notes that, “it is probably due to the stereotyped nature of the phrases and formulas that must be attributed the lack of concordance (between subject and verb, noun and adjective, antecedent and pronoun) that is found in a significant number of examples” of legal discourse (Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 211). See also Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, 231-236, 265-267 and Huehnergard's conclusive remarks on 237.

<sup>323</sup> Line 23' includes both the logogram and a phonetic gloss for the word “blood” (MÚD.MEŠ: *da-mi*).

conjured by Šaušgamuwa's speech. The contrast between them suggests competing interests and political contingents within Amurru that must be dealt with on two registers.

The following clause of the accord indicates that the sons of the Great Lady are indeed regarded as a contingent that can be isolated from their brother the king. The intrinsic connection the brothers appear to have to the mortal fate of their sister is further asserted by Ammistamru II's threat of punishment in kind.

*šanītam šumma mārū rabīti dīna mimma  
inammuš itti Ammistamri mār Niqmepa  
šar Ugarit  
u mārī rabīti tuttadnūšunu  
ina qāti Ammistamru mār Niqmep[a šar] Ugarit  
u ša kī ētapaš ana [mārat rabīti]  
akanna mārī rab[īti] eppušū*

Furthermore, if the sons of the Great Lady should start any legal proceedings against Ammistamru, son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit:

Then you shall give the sons of the Great Lady  
into the hands of Ammistamru, son of Niqmep[a, king of ]Ugarit,  
and as he did to [the Daughter of the Great Lady,]  
so shall be done to the sons of the Gr[eat Lady.]  
(RS 17.318-17.349: 26'-32')

All the other accords and verdicts that restricted future legal suits by Šaušgamuwa and his future descendants contained only the standard assertion that, should they pursue legal claims, "this tablet will overcome him, *tuppu annû ila*"ēšu." This standard legal prohibition was evidently considered an appropriate and sufficient restraint. Even in the previous clause in this tablet, in which the sons of the Great Lady are posited as future claimants alongside Šaušgamuwa, this standard phrase appears. Now the additional threat of rendition and execution, aimed solely at the sons of the Great Lady communicates that



behind the struggle between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa to assert and defend their spheres of patrimonial authority, the Hittite presence within the royal household of Amurru remains a force to be reckoned with.

The sons and daughters of the Great Lady are positioned as a political unit both by the identification of their shared Hittite lineage and by the terms of the retribution threatened in the accord. The implication is that, by winning the right to do with the daughter of the Great Lady as he will, Ammistamru II has also won the right to do with the sons of the Great Lady as he will if they should they oppose him. The daughter and sons of the Great Lady form a united constituency over which Ammistamru II has the power to exact retribution by virtue of his accord with their brother the king.

Šaušgamuwa must hand over his sister to Ammistamru II; furthermore, he must be willing to hand over his brothers to Ammistamru II if they should take action on behalf of their sister. Šaušgamuwa thus concedes his authority to regulate or protect an entire elite constituency within his own royal household. Ammistamru II has not only asserted his power within the sphere of another king's patrimonial authority; he struck a blow against the prestige of the Hittite line in Amurru. In doing so, Ammistamru II once again has undermined the connection between a royal woman and her offspring, yet this time it is the Great Lady herself, not simply her daughter, whom he is challenging. Just as he severed the connection between his wife, the daughter of the Great Lady, and her children, in the case of the sons and daughter of the Great Lady Ammistamru II has subverted the prestige and protection the Great Lady's offspring would otherwise have

drawn from their mother's elevated status, and he has prevented maternal siblings from defending each other's interests.

The stipulations against the sons of the Great Lady protecting their sister and the stipulations against the daughter of the Great Lady appealing to her children both identify a subset of a royal household based on maternal affiliation, one within Amurru and the other within Ugarit. As discussed above, the first divorce document, RS 17.159, stipulated that if Utrišarruma should maintain a connection to his mother, either by following her to Amurru or by reinstating her as queen in Ugarit, he would lose his own position as king of Ugarit. The expected link between the status of a royal woman and her son, the heir, was thus broken. Yet, beyond the relationship between the future king and his mother, the verdict also went on to eliminate the connection between the daughter of the Great Lady and all her children.

*u ina arki ūmī  
mārat Bentešina ana muḥḥi mārīši  
mārātīši ana muḥḥi  
ḥatnīši  
lā iraggum  
ana Ammistamri šar Ugarit  
irtīḥū*

Furthermore, in future days,  
the daughter of Bentešina shall not lay claim to her sons,  
her daughters, (or)  
her sons-in-law.  
They belong to  
Ammistamru, king of Ugarit,  
(RS 17.159: 43-49)

This stipulation marks out a subset of the royal household in two senses. First, it identifies men and women as being the sons, daughters, and sons-in-law of the daughter of the Great Lady. Second, the assumption inherent in the statement that they all now belong to Ammistamru II is that, without this stipulation, their mother would have had a claim on them. Thus the association between royal mothers and their offspring works in two directions: they are identified on the basis of their shared maternal affiliation and she is presumed to have a stake in their positions. Having thus stripped his wife of her connection as a mother to this segment of the royal household of Ugarit, Ammistamru II eliminates her connections to men in the royal household of Amurru with whom she shares a mother. Both her children and her brothers are transferred to Ammistamru II's sphere of authority. As Ammistamru II laid sole claim to her children, so the royal grant RS 17.318-17.349 stipulates that the sons of the Great Lady will belong to Ammistamru II if they should act in concert with each other and defend their sister.

## CONCLUSION

In sum, Ammistamru II asserts the sphere of his authority by severing the expected relationship between two sets of royal women and their offspring, as well as the concomitant relationship between maternal siblings. The relationships he severs are not simply biological or reproductive. Within the context of royal households, such maternal and familial relations are political ones strong enough to necessitate legal regulation. The

consequence of these political bonds is that a royal woman could not be exchanged between two male peers without negotiating the wider network of relationships in which she was located, both on an immediate contemporary level and within terms of a shared lineage. To remove one royal woman from her position, many relationships had to be severed. She is at one and the same time a mother, a wife, a daughter, and a sister. The daughter of the Great Lady's Hittite lineage meant that her case had to be arbitrated on an imperial level and, thus, the dynamics of political relationships based on maternal affiliations that might otherwise have been assumed in the regular function of a royal household were explicitly documented. Whether or not she was still alive, the Great Lady persists as a figure in these negotiations. The verdicts allow us to see that a royal household is constituted both by exchanges between contemporaneous male rulers and by what is inherited on a vertical, intergenerational level: a process of biological and political reproduction in which women are always implicated. Over the course of the negotiations discussed in these past three chapters, Ammistamru II ultimately triumphs because he is able to sever his wife's political relationships both as a mother and through her mother.

## CONCLUSION

These three case studies of collaboration and conflict among royal women and men reveal that gender relations were fundamental both to the exercise of power and to the basis upon which royal authority was conceived. Paternity defined the parameters of a royal household, but it was not the only relationship operative within a patrimonial system. Patrimonial rulers were sons of fathers and fathers of sons, but they were also sons of mothers, brothers of sisters, and husbands of other men's daughters. Moreover, the latter identities were ones through which kings established relationships with other male rulers. To be the son of a mother, the brother of a sister, or the husband of another man's daughter was a modality of political action as much as it was a kinship position. As political modalities, these kinship identities could be negotiated and reconfigured as situations demanded. Ammistamru II's brothers were sons of the queen; yet when they threatened their mother's and brother's power as rulers, their mother exiled them from Ugarit. Utrišarruma was given the choice of either being his father's or his mother's son: to become king in Ugarit or to go with his mother to Amurru. When it was no longer expedient for Šaušgamuwa to remain the brother of his sister, he disassociated himself from her and gave her up to death at the hands of Ammistamru II. The aim of this study has not been to make normative statements concerning the roles of mother, daughter, sister, brother, wife, and husband per se, but to investigate in each case what was at stake and what was possible for the individuals operating within these modalities.

The six letters in Ugaritic from the king to his mother, which were the focus of the first case study, bring to the fore a relational dynamic that can be traced in the Hittite

verdicts. The king's reciprocal identification of himself as son and the mother as queen made use of the epistolary conventions that mark relationship between subordinates and superiors. Yet in two letters the king eschews these forms of honorific address and does not identify himself as her son. The use of the relational term "mother" continues in all these letters; the indicative feature associated with the shift between honorific registers was whether or not the king identified himself as his mother's son. All of these letters, regardless of their variation in epistolary conventions, were written within a consistent political context: the kings dealing with the Hittite imperial powers and military matters. This combination of variance in forms of address and consistency of context indicates that, while communication on affairs of state was a regular feature of the relationship between royal mothers and sons, within this modality a king might choose to assert his authority as king or to draw upon the assistance or favor a subordinate might ask from a superior. The political trajectory encoded in the combinations of the terms "mother" and "queen" offers insight into what political advantage a queen might offer her son in a diplomatic context. For a king to address a royal woman as both mother and queen and to identify himself as her son was to acknowledge that her political tenure had preceded his own. As her son he might rely on the resources and knowledge she could provide on the constellation of interregional and imperial forces he had inherited in taking over his father's rule.

The imperial verdicts examined in the second case study confirm the dynamic of mutual support suggested in the Ugaritic letters. This case study juxtaposed the two different royal women's relationships with their sons and the outcome of their marriages

into the royal household of Ugarit. The first royal woman, Aḫatumilki, mother of Ammistamru II, defended her son's position as king from a threat posed by his brothers, two of her own sons. She gave these two a portion of their patrimony, exiled them to Cyprus, and made them swear an oath to desist from any further action against Ammistamru II. No imperial verdicts dictated her actions; rather, the verdicts confirmed her authority in taking them. On further examination of the context of this case, the relative generational positions of Aḫatumilki and the Hittite Great King Tudḫaliya IV, who judged her case, emerged. Aḫatumilki's tenure as queen preceded not only Tudḫaliya IV's reign, but the reign of his father, Ḫattušili III, who usurped the throne from his brother Muwattalli II's son. She had weathered a turbulent period in which the royal family of Amurru, the kingdom from which she had come, endured a coup orchestrated by Muwattalli II in which her kinsman Bentešina was overthrown and exiled to Hatti and subsequently reinstated in Amurru by Ḫattušili III. Such a woman was certainly capable of assisting her son, the king, in a threat posed within Ugarit by two more of her own sons.

On the other hand, the second royal woman, Ammistamru II's wife, another Amurrite princess, was unable to maintain her position in Ugarit and in turn jeopardized the position of her son as heir. She was divorced by Ammistamru II and sent back to Amurru, and her son Utrišarruma was threatened with losing his claim to the throne should he remain loyal to her, follow her to Amurru, or return her to her position as queen of Ugarit. These stipulations indicate that the son of a king might normally be expected to assist his mother and promote her once he had himself become king. The

necessity to forbid explicitly such actions evokes the modality of political collaboration between mothers and sons evident in the Ugarit letters and expressed in Aḫatumilki's actions on behalf of her son. Closer examination of the background of Ammistamru II's wife revealed her to be a product of the new Hittite order in Syria that followed Hattušili III's assumption of the throne. She was identified in the verdicts as the daughter of Bentešina, the king who had signed a vassal treaty with Hattušili III as a condition of his reinstatement as king in Amurru and who had married Hattušili III's daughter, Gaššuliyawiya. Examination of subsequent imperial verdicts revealed that this daughter of Bentešina was also identified as "the daughter of the Great Lady," namely of Gaššuliyawiya, and so marked by the prestige that her mother held in Amurru, stipulated by the terms of the treaty. The terms by which this daughter was identified communicated two aspects of her position. Her affiliation with powerful figures outside of Ugarit required that her divorce be arbitrated in an imperial court; yet, the fact that she was identified only by her affiliations outside of Ugarit was a manifestation of her failure to secure a place in that kingdom. She had nothing to offer her son in Ugarit.

The third case study examined what was at stake in the affiliations by which this woman was identified: as the wife of Ammistamru II, the daughter of Bentešina, the daughter of the Great Lady, and the sister of Šaušgamuwa. A single woman functioning in a range of modalities-- daughter, wife, and sister-- brokered a network of relationships among a range of political actors. The immediate relationship was the one between Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa. As the wife of the former and sister of the latter, the woman at the center of the case provided the basis for a mode of relationship between the



two kings as “brothers.” When Ammistamru II severed his relationship with the woman, the two kings reverted to being the rulers of two distinct patrimonial spheres. The conflict over who had oversight of the woman became a contest of authority over the parameters of their royal households. When Ammistamru II achieved the power to dictate limits on the relationship between Šaušgamuwa and his sister, he asserted his authority over Šaušgamuwa’s patrimonial sphere. In order to recuperate his standing in relationship to Ammistamru II, Šaušgamuwa disavowed his relationship with his sister. He represented Ammistamru II’s taking his sister back not as an encroachment on his authority but as Ammistamru II finally taking responsibility for a woman Šaušgamuwa had only been keeping watch over as a favor to Ammistamru II. Thus, by redefining his relationship to his sister, Šaušgamuwa reframed his position relative to Ammistamru II.

The stakes of this contest between Šaušgamuwa and Ammistamru II are amplified when considered in light of the other positions the sister/wife occupied. Her Hittite lineage expressed in her designation as the “daughter of the Great Lady” meant that Ammistamru II asserted his will against the expectations embedded in the imperial system of which Ugarit and Amurru were a part. The fundamental feature of the marriages between Hittite princesses and vassal kings was the primacy of the Hittite women and their offspring within the royal household, a position meant to reinforce over generations the primacy of the Hittite ruling family as a whole in the vassal kingdom. The woman’s identification as the daughter of the Great Lady signaled her function as an embodiment of Hittite presence in a vassal kingdom. Ammistamru II’s success in achieving control over her life and death through a lavish payment in gold to

Šaušgamuwa was a manifestation of the leverage Ugarit was continually able to exercise in regard to the Hittite powers by virtue of its wealth and value to the Hittites as a vassal. Once the daughter of a Hittite princess was reduced to being identified as a simply “that woman,” death was inevitable. Ultimately, Ammistamru II did not triumph because he was able to execute her; he triumphed because he was able to empty her titles of the status they should have signified.

Examining the texts in light of the modalities of relationship between royal women and men has proved to be, as Joan Scott argues, a productive strategy of historical analysis.<sup>324</sup> The pragmatic dimensions of Ugarit’s political position in Syria and the strategies of Hittite rule are thrown into sharp relief. Two royal women operating in the same period, such as Aḫatumilki and the daughter of Bentešina, harken backwards and forwards to the formative events in Syria in which they established their positions. Because royal women had the ability to bridge generations of male rulers and so to play a pivotal role in brokering relationships among rulers, the texts that record their activities are rich sources of data on the workings of a political system. The data the texts provide become available when the terms that identify women are viewed as strategic, not as titles to be taken at face value. That is, the terms “daughter,” “sister,” and “mother” were used in these texts to indicate processes as much as individual people. Women appear as “daughters” in contexts in which they represent the royal households from which they come. The daughter of Bentešina was surely not his only daughter; she bore this title because she had been chosen to represent her father in Ugarit and in turn drew her status

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<sup>324</sup> Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” 1069.

from his own. Her identification as “sister” of Šaušgamuwa reflected the fact that her brother had taken over their father’s role as king of Amurru. Her fate in Ugarit was an immediate concern to him and any support she might receive would come from him. To be identified as the mother of a king meant that a royal woman had been successful in operating in all these political modalities: as the daughter of a king chosen to represent her family’s interests in a marriage alliance, as the sister to a king who continued the political alliances established in her father’s reign, and as the wife of the king in the household into which she had married.

Across our three case studies, the position of royal women as mothers emerges as particularly important, both pragmatically and symbolically. The modality of royal mothers was important politically precisely because the baseline of authority in these systems was patrimonial. Every one of the parties to the cases we have examined was the son or daughter of a king. The claim of descent from a king was a prerequisite to participation at this political level. Patrimonialism is present in these texts not in the fact that the kings involved in the cases were positioned as fathers, but in the fact that they positioned themselves as sons. The prologue to every verdict is the lineage of the Hittite ruler or his viceroy in Karkamiš. Tudḫaliya IV identifies himself as the son of Ḫattušili III, Great King; the son of the son of Muršili II, Great King; the son of the son of the son of Šuppiluliuma I. Initešub identifies himself as the son of Šaḫurunuwa, king of Karkamiš; the son of the son of Šarukušuh, king of Karkamiš. Within the decrees of these verdicts, Šaušgamuwa is identified as the son of Bentešina, king of Amurru, and Ammistamru II as the son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit. This is especially true in the

passages in which the decision is declared to be in force into a future defined by the future male descendants, “the sons of the sons of their sons,” of Ammistamru II and Šaušgamuwa. In all these cases, the name of the father is always linked to his position as king. Fathers are physically absent yet ideologically present as legitimating figures. Royal women, operating in the modality of mother in the reigns of their sons, were living connections to these absent fathers, both their own fathers and the fathers of their sons. The “House of the Father,” in short, was a house perpetuated by women.

## Abbreviations

- KTU<sup>2</sup> Dietrich, Manfred, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín, eds. *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places, KTU: Second, Enlarged Edition*, (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995).
- PRU III Nougayrol, Jean. “Les Textes Accadiens.” In *Le Palais Royal d’Ugarit. Vol. III: Texts Accadiens et Hourites des Archives Est, Ouest et Centrales*, edited by Claude F.-A. Schaeffer. Mission de Ras Shamra 6, xxxiii-xliii, 1-280. Paris: Imprimeries Nationale & Klincksieck, 1955.
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- Ug III Schaeffer, Claude F. A., ed. *Ugaritica. III: Sceaux et Cylindres Hittites, Épée Gravée du Cartouche de Mineptah, Tablettes Chypro-Minoennes et Autres Découvertes Nouvelles de Ras Shamra*, Mission de Ras Shamra 8. Paris: P. Geuthner, 1956.

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